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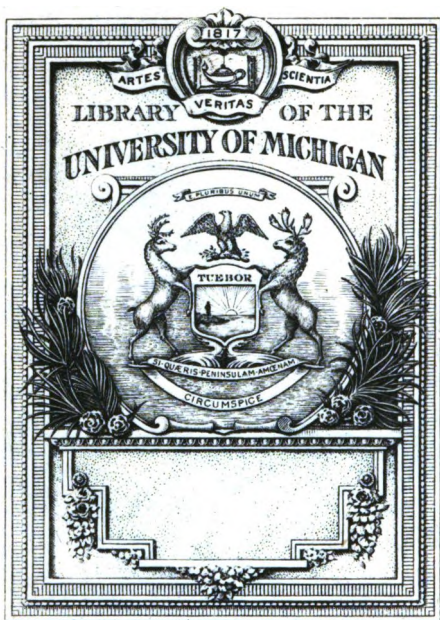
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Sir John Smith, Bart.



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A
WINTER IN LONDON;

OR,
SKETCHES OF FASHION :

A NOVEL,
IN THREE VOLUMES,

Thomas BY
T. S. SURREY.

..... "Truths like these
Will none offend, whom 'tis a praise to please."
YOUNG.

VOL. I.

London :
PRINTED FOR RICHARD PHILLIPS, BRIDGE-STREET,
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1806.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

COUNTESS OF MOIRA.

Madam,

AMONG the Illustrious Few, who in recent times have merited the title of Patrons of Literature, the name of the Earl of Moira stands pre-eminent in honour. That Name will be recognised by posterity with as grateful a veneration for the encouragement it has bestowed on science and the arts, as for the valour which has distinguished it in the camp or the wisdom which has characterized it in the senate.

Permit me, then, Madam, to solicit, for a production in the humblest walk

of literature, the sanction of the Countess of Moira, whose amiable virtues and brilliant accomplishments add a lustre to the rank in which she was born, and to that Name which is now honoured in Her Person.

I am sensible that I incur the charge of presumption, by offering to Your Ladyship a trifle so little worthy of the Noble Patroness I have selected; but I trust that the condescension which is synonymous with the name of Moira will graciously receive even this humble testimony of the profound respect with which I have the honour to subscribe myself

Your Ladyship's

Most obedient

And most humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following pages have been written under a conviction that the object of the reader who may honour them with a perusal is amusement ; and if the author is in any degree so successful as to accomplish that, he readily relinquishes every loftier aim.

While, however, he dissents from the opinion of those who consider a novel chiefly as a vehicle for instruction, he is far from cherishing

an indifference relative to the moral effects to be produced on the mind, even by a work of mere amusement. With the desire to entertain principally in view, he has at the same time been studious to guard against conveying or strengthening any impression in the slightest degree unfavourable to the cause of virtue : for he would rather, infinitely rather, be classed with the dull than the immoral.

The favour which has been bestowed on two former attempts of the author has rather increased than diminished the anxiety inseparable from an appeal to public opinion ;

while the liberality which gave birth to the present production creates in the breast of the writer a sincere wish for its remuneration, in addition to that anxiety.

London,
January 1806.

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WINTER IN LONDON.

CHAPTER I.

A STORM.

IT was that season of the year, when evening "fills the lap of Earth with fallow leaves." A sultry day was ended; and as night advanced, the appearance of the heavens denoted an approaching storm. The moon had risen amid black clouds, which, floating in various directions, now admitted streams of momentary light, and now spread wide a still and dreary darkness.

Among the many, who with anxious eyes watched the dread birth of the impending

tempest, thinking on friends exposed to its relentless rage, was one, whose lot in life was lowly, but whose heart was dignified by the genuine impressions of conjugal and maternal love.

Her husband, an industrious fisherman, and her eldest boy had been out at sea all day; and, by long-practised reckoning, dame Laurence calculated that their little bark was still too far from home.

She was sitting at the window of her humble hut, which commanded a wide view of the ocean, when suddenly a vivid flash of lightning darted across the gloom, and was succeeded by a tremendous crash of thunder. Rain fell in torrents, the wind howled dreadfully, and the foaming billows of the ocean bounded and recoiled with horrible concussion.

Instinctively the mother snatched her sleeping infant from her knees, and nestled it closely in her bosom. —“God send thy father safe home, my dear babe!” exclaimed

she ; and the prayer of her heart was accorded.

About ten minutes after the commencement of the storm, in an interval between the roaring of the winds and waves, the well-known signal of the boat's arrival struck her delighted ear. She answered it by placing a light in the window ; then laying her infant in its wooden cradle, she hastened to prepare the comforts of a humble hearth for its master. The crackling faggot blazed, and the flames, reflected from the white-washed walls, served as an additional beacon to the fatigued and wet mariners without, who soon entered their comfortable home.—

“ Well, Kate ! ” — “ Dear George ! ” and several hearty kisses, introduced this happy pair to each other ; while their son, a fine lad of fourteen, throwing off his wet cap and jacket, stooped down softly to kiss his little sister in the cradle.

In a trice their meal smoked on the table, where health and content adminis-

tered to these children of labour enjoyment more exquisite than results from all the pleasures which art invents for the victims of opulent indolence.

The storm still raged ; but the situation of their dwelling, and their habits of life, had rendered such scenes common to this family ; and they would perhaps have sunk to sleep wholly unmindful of its violence, had not their apprehensions been awakened for the fate of their fellow-creatures exposed to those dangers from which they had been providentially delivered.

They had finished their repast, and dame Laurence had filled with tobacco her good man's pipe, which he was in the act of applying to his lips, when the firing of minute guns proclaimed some ship in danger.

Letting fall his pipe, and striking the table with his hand,—“ That's the Indian man we saw making signals for a pilot, Jem,—my life on't ! ” exclaimed Laurence.

"I dare say 'tis, father," said Jem. "And if it is, boy, Lord have mercy upon the crew! for she's in no plight to weather such a gale as this."

"Poor souls!" said dame Laurence. The guns continued firing incessantly and irregularly, denoting the increasing peril of the vessel.

Laurence's hut was situated on a solitary spot, close to the sea, on the Sussex coast, not far from Brighton. With that prompt humanity which characterizes the English mariner, he and his son flew instantly to the beach with lights.

On a sudden, however, the firing ceased, and nothing was heard but the dreadful howlings of the storm.

"They're gone! They're gone!" exclaimed Laurence, "and the Lord have mercy on their souls!"

As he spake, a brilliant flash of lightning illumined for a moment the expanse of ocean, and at a considerable distance they

descried a small boat crowded with human beings. They now redoubled their efforts; they kept up their fires in defiance of the rain and wind; they hoisted out poles with lanterns affixed to them, and put in practice every method which they could devise, to add to the chance of rescuing their fellow-creatures from impending dissolution.

In a few minutes, however, their benevolent zeal was chilled, and their generous hopes annihilated. Loud, horrid shrieks, piercing their ears and hearts, proclaimed the fate of those whom they had vainly hoped to succour. Yet, still reluctant to believe the worst, they lingered nearly another hour on the beach, and kept up the signals of their lanterns and fires.

At length, drenched with rain, fatigued, and dejected, they returned to their hut, wondering with simplicity at the ways of the Omnipotent, yet piously acknowledging his wisdom and his love.

Scarcely had they thrown off their wet

garments, and once more seated themselves by the fire, when a loud tapping at their window again alarmed them. Dame Laurence opened the casement, screamed with terror, and fell, half fainting, into her chair; while the fisherman lifting up the latch, the object which so terrified his wife entered the hut.

It was an object whose sudden appearance, under such circumstances, might have occasioned a momentary terror to stronger intellects than those of poor dame Laurence. A tall thin figure, whose skin was of the darkest bronze, with no other covering than a pair of trowsers, and whose long black hair hung wet upon his back, stood before them, holding in his arms a little infant apparently deprived of life. Terror, surprise, and every other feeling, fled before the instinct of humanity, which warmed the hearts of the Laurences. No verbal appeal was necessary to arouse their efforts.

All the exertions that their humble skill suggested; and all the means which their scanty stores afforded, were promptly used for the re-animation of the little stranger; and they at length received the inestimable remuneration of success. They were blessed with the joy of beholding the little lips of the babe quiver with returning life, and saw his beautiful eyes open again to light.

Relieved in some degree from their incessant attention to the infant by these symptoms of his recovery, the Laurences had leisure to survey minutely his preserver. He was one of that class of the natives of China who are sometimes hired to assist in the navigation of ships from India. His long black hair, hanging over his shoulder, swept the brick floor on which he sat reclining his head upon his hand. He seemed to suffer pain; but, as he could not utter a syllable of English, the poor creature endured his agonies with sullen silence, having ob-

stinately resisted, with violent gestures, every importunity of the Laurences that he would take such restoratives as they possessed.

Dame Laurence having changed the infant's wet clothes, which were of the finest sort, for such coarse linen as her own child wore, now placed him in her bed, which stood in a corner of the room. The recovered little urchin smiled in her face, as in conscious gratitude for her care. "Thou be'st a lovely babe," cried the kind-hearted woman, - "and I'll be bound art some grand body's child. — These check things of my Sally's are wide different from what you wore last, to be sure; and these rough sheets are not such as you're used to;—but though they ben't hollands, nor laces, nor lawns, they will keep thee warm from the weather, poor darling! and so God bless thee, I say!"

As she spake she kissed the little creature, who, ignorant alike of the losses it had

sustained, and the dangers it had escaped, slumbered as peacefully as if it reposed on down, and had been rocked to rest by a watching mother.

The Chinese, meanwhile, continued to exhibit symptoms of increasing pain: he threw himself at full length upon the floor, placed both his hands upon his head, and from his gestures gave reason to conclude that in his escape from the wreck he had received some injury which threatened to be fatal.

The Laurences became alarmed. It was now considerably past the midnight hour, and their hut was a mile distant from any other habitation. Should he die, what account could they give of the child! If his life could be saved till the morning only, some of the gentry at Brighton might understand his language, and learn to whom the poor ~~baby~~ belonged. But if it should prove that these two were all that were

saved from the wreck, and the *China-man* should die, what was to become of the poor little boy!

Such was the argument of the fisherman, who at one moment was on the point of setting out for Brighton immediately, and the next declined it till the morning. With much difficulty they at length prevailed over the poor creature's obstinacy so far as to force a small quantity of spirits into his mouth, and placed him on a bed by the fire. He still, however, remained sullen, and apparently insensible, betraying no symptoms of anxiety either about his own fate, or that of the infant. In this state he continued during the remainder of the night. Laurence and his son, who were exhausted with fatigue, and whose labours would inevitably return with the dawn of day, were compelled to seek refreshment from sleep; but the kind-hearted hostess watched by the side of her patient, and afforded him all the relief in her power.

Just as morning dawned, the affrighted dame awakened her husband with an exclamation that "the black was dying." Laurence and his son instantly arose, and witnessed the last agonies of the expiring Chinese.

"What now is to be done?" cried Laurence. "Consult your betters, to be sure," answered the wife. "You are going up to the squire's: he's a justice of peace, you know, and will give orders what's best to be done. We have done our duty, to the best of our power, dear George, and God's will be done!"

"True, wife, true," replied George; "you speak right, and so it shall be. Squire Dickens is as rich as e'er a lord in the land; and mayhap he may do for the poor babe, or find out his own natural parents. Come, Jem, quick, trim the boat, and I'll be down with you in a whiff."

CHAPTER II.

THE FOUNDER OF A FAMILY.

MR. Sawyer Dickens, the gentleman to whose villa the Laurences now steered their little vessel, laden with fish for his table, was universally known as one of the wealthiest commoners in England.

There were not wanting, however, some persons with strong memories, who recollected that the origin of the wealthy banker was far from splendid. In truth, the first property acquired by the father of Mr. Dickens was obtained by the application of his talents and industry to the useful employments of cleaning boots and shoes, and knives and forks, at a public house in the neighbourhood of Newgate Market.

Ned Dickens was indebted to Yorkshire for his birth, parentage and education, and was a firm and sincere professor of that celebrated creed, "*that pence get shillings, and shillings get pounds.*" This faith enabled him to endure with patience and humility many a cuff and kick, and cheered him under many a cloud of brickdust. Thus a few years' devotion to these pursuits enabled Ned Dickens to become a creditor of the nation, to the amount of fifty pounds Five per Cent. Stock, and promoted him to the rank of waiter. The same saving faith still urged him onward in the rich man's progress, and shielded him from all temptation to turn aside. "A penny saved's a penny got," often rang in his ears, as he cast his little eyes upon the spruce garments of a brother waiter at a neighbouring coffee-house, and then surveyed his own old suit of greasy corderoy.

To all this personal merit, Fortune added

her blind boon, by rendering the existing circumstances precisely such as best agreed with his peculiar genius and disposition.

His master died, and bequeathed all his right and title to the house, and the good-will of the trade, to his beloved widow, and his hopeful heir Tommy Jones.

Tommy was what at that period was termed a *natty spark* of eighteen, and the widow Jones was one of the numerous class of foolishly good-natured mothers. Ned was three years older than Tommy, and was, at the death of his master, worth nearly two hundred pounds.

Vauxhall, Sadler's-Wells, and the Dog-and-Duck, became the exchequers into which Tommy Jones, assisted by certain fair friends, regularly paid the receipts of his mother's bar. These, however, were soon found inadequate to support the frolics of this spirited youth; and Ned Dickens's coffers became the budget from which his young

master, with due humility, and at ample discount, drew his supplies.

The thrifty Dickens kept a good account. Thus the idleness and folly of the master enriched the servant; and by the time that Tommy was two-and-twenty he had broken his mother's heart, and spent his last shilling. He then enlisted himself as an East-India soldier, and Mr. Edward Dickens succeeded him as landlord of that house, which, a few years before, he had entered a pennyless and almost naked boy.

With the attainment of such an eminence as this above the level of his ancestors, many a plodder would have been content. Not so Edward Dickens :—he was destined to be the founder of a family; and this little elevation served only to open to him the brighter paths that still towered above him. He did not halt. At five-and-twenty he considered that matrimony would have been an expensive clog in his progress, and he

consequently resisted with a Joseph's virtue all the bewitching lures of the widows and daughters which were daily surrounding him. To discover poor butchers, poor bakers, poor distillers, and poor excisemen, was Ned's constant study, from a persuasion that his own ready cash would produce more profit in proportion to the greater need of those with whom he bargained.

The scene of action now grew confined, in comparison with his stimulus to exertion. Fortune, again befriending him, soon opened a wider field to his talents. Adjoining to his own house was that of Mr. Barton, an eminent man in his trade, which was that of importing rum and brandy in puncheons and pieces, and retailing the same commodities with a little British addition, in quarters of gills, to the gardeners, butchers, fishmongers, and their fair assistants, who resorted to Newgate market. In this traffic Mr. Barton was rapidly acquiring wealth; he was already a common-council man of the

ward, and would, in all probability, have been lord mayor of London, but for the carelessness of his house-keeper, who one night forgetting to take off his cravat after his return from a turtle-feast, the poor man paid his life a forfeit for an inordinate indulgence of his appetite.

Next morning, no sooner was Edward Dickens informed why the shop was not opened, than he flew to the nephew of his neighbour, who was his heir at law; and who, being a thoughtless young man, then an ensign in the guards, very good-naturedly promised that, if he had the power, Mr. Dickens should have the lease and good-will of his uncle's house at a fair valuation.

This lucky hit, as some called it, but this quick foresight, as he himself justly thought it, proved a considerable advancement in the fortune of Mr. Dickens; for, as young Barton lived chiefly at an hotel in St. James's Street, he knew nothing of the value of his uncle's concern, and very confidently left

the regulation of the whole transaction to a fashionable auctioneer, who in his turn being engaged to sell some pictures and porcelain at the west end of the town, sent a young disciple of seventeen to value the concern, against a deep old practitioner in the city, whom Dickens had engaged. It is an axiom in mercantile morality, to buy as cheap and sell as dear as possible. Therefore, though the stock and business of Mr. Barton was certainly worth three thousand pounds, it is not right to infer that any thing like a bribe was the cause of their being assigned over to Mr. Dickens at one.

Such was the fact; and from that moment the thrifty Yorkshireman acquired hundreds with more facility than he had before gained pounds.

On his fortieth birth-day Edward Dickens arose worth forty thousand pounds. His residence was then a small house on Garlick Hill; where, with an establishment con-

sisting of a house-keeper, one man-servant, and a clerk whom he had taken from a charity-school as an apprentice, he transacted more business, and gained more thousands, than many of his fraternity who kept their country house and carriages, and left the cares of their business to sixteen careless clerks, and an idle *fagging* partner.

It was at that epoch of his life that business introduced Mr. Dickens to the acquaintance of Hannah Sawyer, a well-looking woman, about his own age, the widow of the chief partner in a bank at Bristol. He soon discovered that her husband had died worth at least twice as much as he himself possessed, and he instantly persuaded himself that he had never seen so desirable a woman as this widow.

Expensive as it was, he insisted upon lodging the fair prize in his own house during her stay in London, and, for more reasons than he confessed, persisted in ac-

companying her and one of the surviving partners to Doctor's Commons, with poor Mr. Sawyer's will.

His visage lengthened as he heard the clauses read, which condemned fifty thousand pounds of the widow's property to the strong boxes of the bank at Bristol, during the continuation of the present partnership (which could only be dissolved by unanimous consent), and for which she was only to receive a proportionate rate of the profit arising from the bank. Still, however, there remained thirty thousand pounds unappropriated, and the whole was at her own disposal, with only the above restriction.

In vain the gentleman who accompanied the widow from Bristol crossed-in between the object of his own hopes and the brandy-merchant;—the latter was the favoured admirer.

Mrs. Sawyer had been advanced to the honours of a bride to the Bristol banker, from the capacity of a menial servant. In

one of those deliriums, which sometimes seize old bachelors who have scoffed all the days of their youth at matrimony, old Sawyer, at the age of threescore and ten, took Hannah, his house-maid, to wife. She had tenderly nursed the old man in his fits of the gout, for the space of twelve years, and was rewarded for her attention by a bequest of eighty thousand pounds. This fortune, and her own fair hand, Hannah, in less than a month, was prevailed upon to bestow on the "discreet," the "sober," the "jolly-looking" Dickens, in preference to the "conceited," "boyish," "pragmatical," Mr. Willis, the junior partner in the house of Sawyer and Co.

Thus invested with the privileges of a master, the bridegroom repaired to the bank at Bristol, and was in all due form introduced to the partners.

Though the education of Mr. Dickens had not extended beyond reading the catechism, he had taught himself to write the

word "received," and he could sign his own name. For a slight knowledge of figures he was indebted to his love of money, which rendered it indispensable to know how to keep or to check his accounts. His interest in the banking concern now caused him to regret the want of a more liberal education, as it puzzled him exceedingly at first to comprehend the arcana of the innermost counting-house. So powerful, however, was his love of gain, that his naturally keen penetration, and quickness of apprehension, soon enabled him to form a just estimate of the value of the opportunity which Fortune had thus again bestowed on him.

The first use he made of his knowledge was to cajole the two junior partners of the house into an abandonment of their shares in his favour, for what appeared to them a splendid remuneration. The two others, he calculated, were old ; and though they both had children, he strenuously objected to

the admission of any of their progeny into the Bristol bank.

In the mean time his bride, who was a woman of plain good sense, without any thing remarkably vicious or virtuous in her composition, brought this man of wealth a son and heir, who was baptized, in honour of his mother's first husband, by the name of Sawyer.

In paying this compliment to his spouse, Dickens, however, had a latent motive ;—for, as the firm of the bank was still Sawyer and Co., he looked forward the fifth part of a century, when it might still be Sawyer Dickens and Co., with his son at the head of the house.

The same cunning made him appear to yield to his wife in consenting to retain the coach and black geldings which old Sawyer had sported before him. For though the provender of coachman and horses often cost him a sigh, yet he understood enough

of banking to know that it would injure his credit to put down an equipage, and he was therefore compelled to go to church in his coach. Similar motives induced him to retain the same household establishment, and to cultivate the same expensive connexions which his predecessor had courted.

The experience of every day now brought fresh joy to Mr. Dickens. Seated in his counting-house, with all the consequence of wealth, this Bristol Plutus, who, a few years back, had followed, almost barefoot, the York waggon to London, now received the bows and the cringing applications of merchants, peers, and even statesmen, for the loan of small parts of that wealth, which he had accumulated and acquired. With what rapture did his keen eyes regale themselves upon the bonds, deeds, mortgages, and other securities, which the folly, the extravagance, or the misfortune of others poured into his coffers! Every sigh which the embarrassed man breathed in his hear-

ing was a plaudit to his prudence, and the tears which repentant prodigality shed in his sight proved nutriment to the selfishness, which had inspired him with the love of hoarding.

The climax of his prosperity however was yet to come. One of the oldest and wealthiest banking-houses in the metropolis was reduced to the most imminent danger of bankruptcy, by the imprudent speculations of one of the partners, who had employed immense sums in a foreign concern, which sums accident prevented from recurring to the bank at the expected period. The same cause which occasioned this disastrous disappointment operated upon the mercantile interest in general, and money was not to be obtained at any premium or on any security. The expedient of the government becoming pawnbrokers had not at that time been thought of: no influence, however powerful, at that period, would have availed the unprincipled or unfortunate speculator, by procuring from

the country at large a loan of commercial exchequer bills to prop an individual's credit. The general dismay and distress of that period were, to men like Mr. Dickens, subjects of self-gratulation, and sources of still further gain. He, among the few whose hoards enabled them to avail themselves of such an opportunity, and who had knowledge enough of money affairs to perceive it, aware that the gloom was temporary, purchased the national funds, then beyond all precedent depressed, at such prices as almost doubled his immense property. To crown the whole, the chief partner in the banking-house alluded to, as a last resource to save his tottering credit, applied to Mr. Dickens. Estates in Cumberland, of far greater value than the amount of all their wants, were pledged, as a security that the borrowers should replace, at a stated time, in the funds, as much stock, at whatever price it might be purchased, as was now disposed of to supply their need, and for the use of

which a premium was given so infamously usurious that it was never named. By this transaction the credit of the banking-house was saved, and, while many of lesser note were shattered to irremediable ruin by the pressure of the times, the house of Darlington and Co. stood firm, or rose, if possible, more proudly eminent than it was before the general shock.

Mr. Darlington was a man of worth and honour. He was descended from the younger branch of a noble family, and was in every respect worthy of his nobility. He had a son, a partner in the bank, whose sanguine temper had been the cause of their embarrassment, and he had a young and lovely daughter.

Time in his ceaseless flight soon stole away the months between the day of borrowing and the day of payment. The younger Darlington, whose indiscretion had so nearly proved fatal to the house, with a zeal honourable to his memory, de-

terminated to repair as much as possible the injury he had occasioned, by visiting, in person, the plantations he had purchased in the West Indies; and inspecting, with his own eyes, the accounts of his agents, which his hopes prompted him to believe exaggerated, if not false. These shadowy hopes, however, vanished before the fatal truth. He found his affairs even worse than they had been represented; still greater losses threatened him—his ardent spirit could not submit to the blow of stern adversity—remorse was followed by despair—he sickened and died upon the plantation.

This calamity in a moment dissolved for ever all the fond hopes of the unfortunate father. The bonds to Mr. Dickens thus were forfeited; the mortgaged lands, the mansion of his forefathers, and, in fact, the key to all the property which Darlington possessed was thus in the custody of Dickens,

for on his mercy the credit of the bank now poised.

The Bristol banker was soon apprised of this state of Darlington's affairs. He felt no surprise: in fact, excepting the death of young Darlington, he had looked to just such a termination of the transaction; and that event, however melancholy to the father, was to him a source of further satisfaction. Without loss of time he repaired to London, taking with him his son, Sawyer Dickens. Knowing by experience the importance of a good education, Dickens had determined to bestow upon this his only child as much learning as he had capacity to receive. For this purpose he had provided him, at home, with the best tutors in all the branches of education, fearing that at a school he might imbibe habits of expense, and idle notions of generosity,—a danger from which he well knew, he was secure at home.

Thus, at the age of eighteen, Sawyer Dickens was as well stored with acquirements as most boys of the same age educated even at the best public schools. His disposition was marked by nothing remarkably vicious, nor did it display itself in any acts of generosity or kindness. If any trait of his mind was at that early period more conspicuous than another, it was that sort of feeling which has frequently been denominated *purse pride*, and which perhaps cannot be more significantly expressed. From his father and his mother he received lessons upon the importance of wealth; and indeed, from all that he saw and heard around him under their roof, he could not fail to imbibe a conviction of the omnipotence of riches.

Such was the youth whom Mr. Dickens conveyed with him to town. Their chaise stopped at Mr. Darlington's house, in Cavendish-square, just as the unfortunate man was endeavouring to console his daughter for the

death of her brother, and the probable consequences of his debt to Mr. Dickens. He heard the carriage draw up, and saw from the window his unwelcome visitors. "Good God!" exclaimed the agonized father, drawing his trembling girl to his bosom, "he is here; the wolf is already here, my child; he is come to devour your father!" Ere he had recovered from the shock, the servant announced Mr. Dickens. Politeness and delicacy were *caviare* to the Bristol banker; he followed the servant, and in a moment he and his son were in the room. Amelia clung round her father, and looked with terror on the intruders. Darlington held his hand to his forehead, and was dumb.— Dickens, without ceremony, walked up to him, and taking the other hand shook it in a friendly manner; while Sawyer, riveted to the spot where he entered, was struck with awe at the sight of distress and beauty. Repulsing this freedom, Mr. Dar-

lington, with an effort concealing his tenderer feelings, said, with dignity, "You are here, Mr. Dickens, rather unexpectedly."

"Mr. Darlington, I am not a man of words," replied Dickens; "I know your situation, and I am come here on purpose to save the credit of your house."

"Sir!" said Mr. Darlington, with an emphasis full of meaning, and an expressive glance of the eye.

"You doubt," said Dickens.

"Yes, sir," said Darlington, "both your will and your power. Could the credit of a banker be sustained in London while his family domains are in the hands of his creditors?"

"Certainly not," replied the other; "but these are not subjects for children," looking on Amelia.

"My daughter's distress, sir, is for a loss that can never be retrieved: my poor boy's zeal has cost him dear." He was compelled to cover his face with his hand-

kerchief for a moment, then continued :—
“ Mr. Dickens, you are a father—judge if this visit at present can be acceptable.”

“ Mr. Darlington, I am a father, and I have my feelings as well as others, as my actions shall prove ; but in this world, sir, we all know feelings must submit to circumstances.”

“ Sir !” said Mr. Darlington, with mingled sorrow and contempt.

“ I would be plainer with you,” replied Dickens ; “ but——” and again he cast his eyes on Amelia.

“ Retire, my love, a few minutes,” said Mr. Darlington, handing his daughter to the door. “ Go into another room, Sawyer,” said Mr. Dickens to his son ; and the two fathers were alone.

“ Mr. Darlington,” said Dickens, smoothing his chin with his right hand, while he placed the other in his breeches pocket—

“ Mr. Darlington, as I said before, I am not a man of words ; I know precisely your

situation, Mr. Darlington, and every twist and turn of your affairs, Mr. Darlington. I grieve for the loss of your son, who was certainly a very promising young man, but for this unlucky business.—But to the point, Mr. Darlington: you have still a daughter left, Mr. Darlington, and a very fine young creature to be sure she is. Now, Mr. Darlington, two hundred thousand pounds is not to be picked up in the streets; and if it be not forthcoming, why, you know, I may foreclose in a few days, and the thing would soon get wind; and then, I leave you to judge, Mr. Darlington, what would be the consequence: bad news flies apace, and a run on the bank would be the upshot, as you must be aware, Mr. Darlington. Now I have been calculating and reckoning these points, and what's the end on't? Why, this, to be sure: that if it was not necessary to raise this sum of two hundred thousand pounds directly, why, in time, things might come round; next year's crop

in the West Indies may not be so bad as the last, and the year after that may be better still: so that, if appearances could keep as they are,—why, people need be no wiser than they are, you know, Mr. Darlington; and they will bring their money to your counter the same as if it was as safe as ever, Mr. Darlington.”

The various emotions which this harangue created in the breast of Mr. Darlington are indescribable. Frequently was he on the point of stopping it short; but, desirous of hearing the conclusion, he suffered him to proceed thus far, when the insinuation contained in the last sentence put him off his guard, and he exclaimed—“ Oh, Harry! oh, my son! now—now I feel the wounds you have inflicted: I am compelled to listen to an insinuation against my honour and my honesty! Your wealth, sir, and my misfortunes have given you the power of ruining me, but not of insulting me with impunity.”

“ Insult you, Mr. Darlington! Why, your

misfortunes have turned your brain. Insulted you!—I came a hundred and twenty miles to hush up matters, and put things straight,—and this is called insulting! This may be fine logic, for aught I know, Mr. Darlington; but I'm sure it's not according to *my* notions of business."

"What is it but insult, sir, to suppose that the house of Darlington would receive the money of its customers, when I know that its bankruptcy may take place at any hour you please? No, sir—no: if such is your intended clemency, I refuse it. Foreclose instantly, sir: take possession of Darlington-hall as soon as you please; advertise it for sale by auction, if you will. It may occasion me to shut up my doors in Lombard-street; but it shall not make me a villain!"

Mr. Dickens stared with astonishment at the warmth of Mr. Darlington; for, in truth, he never meant to convey that meaning by

his speech, which the quick sense of honour in Darlington attached to it.

“ One word, one word, Mr. Darlington, and I have done,” said Dickens. “ You have run your head against a post, as the saying is ; that’s no fault of mine ; I had no meaning to offend you. To come to the point, for I have always found plain dealing the best road, my meaning was this—You are under bond to pay me two hundred thousand pounds next month, or the estates in Cumberland are mine. Now, I know you can’t pay me without shutting your doors in Lombard-street, as you say ; and if it comes to be known that I have foreclosed the mortgage, because you can’t redeem it, why, it comes to the same thing ; for your credit is gone, and then where’s your bank ? Now, Mr. Darlington, don’t be offended again, Mr. Darlington ; though I am what I am, through hard working and close saving,—and though your family, as I have heard, be-

come of lords and earls,—yet, Mr. Darlington, my two hundred thousand 's as good as a duke's ; and all I say is, Why, there it is, and more to that, if it is wanted ; there 's the use of the Bristol bank besides. And for what? you will say. Why, for a fair share of the profits ; a fair honest share, Mr. Darlington ; Edward Dickens is not the man to want more than his own."

Mr. Darlington was staggered. " If, sir," said he, " I have misconstrued your meaning, I beg your pardon. Now if I understand you rightly, you are willing to let the money advanced remain in the bank, upon being admitted to a proportionate share of the profits ; that is, you propose yourself as a partner."

" Not quite so : I am in years, Mr. Darlington ; my son is coming on apace—eighteen years old last March the fourth. He is a sharp lad, has the best of *larning*; the very best, Mr. Darlington, that money could buy. You have a daughter——"

“ Sir! forgive the interruption,” said Mr. Darlington, “ you do not mean, perhaps, to wound me; but a proposal so abrupt, to place the son of another in the situation which the death of my own has so recently made vacant, is not of a nature to be attended to immediately. I thank you, however, for the confidence your proposal evinces. Nay, I will not absolutely refuse it; but I see so many obstacles to it, that, in requesting a little time for consideration, I would by no means have you withhold such proceedings as your judgment directs, from any notion of my consent which such a request might imply. You shall hear from me, sir, as soon as possible; but for the present you *must* excuse me.”

These sentences were uttered with the interruption of sobs; and then ringing the bell for a servant, he left the room without waiting an instant for Mr. Dickens's reply.

“ Oh, Harry Darlington!” inwardly ejaculated the distressed father, as he tottered

to his library, "oh, human happiness!—I have nurtured a son from infancy to manhood—I have seen him qualified to occupy with honour the place of his father and grandfather:—he is vanished! In an instant the hopes and affections that sweetened my life are dissipated like the dream of an hour! Thou art gone, my poor Harry, for ever!....And the son of an ale-house waiter!—Good God! is it he shall rise up in the place of a Darlington?"

The anguish of this worthy man was extreme, and the appearance of his daughter, who sought to alleviate his sorrow, only increased his distress.

In the mean time Dickens and his son had quitted the house; the former with no slight degree of astonishment at the conduct of Mr. Darlington.

"The thing, however, must take that course," said he to his son; "I am sure it must, Sawyer.—There's no loop hole. Pride's in the way: he thinks we are not

grand enough in family connexions :—but we are in possession of that that will buy titles, boy.—He is a good meaning man that Darlington, but a little weak in the noddle : crying and pouting about what can't be helped ; all idle nonsense. Well, let him alone a bit—must come to, Sawyer. We have him in a bag ; of two evils he'll choose the least, I warrant. Won't relish bankruptcy. See if any of his grand cousins will raise two hundred thousand—not amongst them all together. Let him try the city—many a one willing to catch at such an opening ; but where 's their hundred thousands ? Yes, yes, I foresaw all this ; must come to us at last, and then, Sawyer, you are made for ever. The best accounts in all the city—receivership of the county—treasurership accounts—government accounts ; I know what I am about, my boy ; and I am sure Sawyer Dickens is not the undutiful son or the snivelling fool that would baulk the plans of his father.”

As this votary of wealth now prophesied, precisely so it came to pass. After a variety of struggles between pride and shame—between the instant disgrace and ruin of bankruptcy, and the more remote humiliation of adding Sawyer Dickens to the firm, the heart-broken Darlington acceded at length to the latter. Sawyer Dickens was immediately admitted, upon the most liberal and polite terms, as an inmate in the house of Mr. Darlington, and attended the banking-house in the capacity of a pupil, who was hereafter to become a principal in the concern.

It was the substance of one clause in the articles of this agreement, that if, on or before a certain day, Sawyer Dickens married Amelia Darlington, then and in that case the said sum of two hundred thousand pounds, now belonging to Edward Dickens, with all other share, interest, and concern whatever which he now possessed in the house

of Darlington and Dickens, should be and become the joint property of the said Sawyer Dickens and Augustus Darlington, and the survivor of them, for ever. The intent of this clause was obvious, and that intent was answered. The credit, the fortunes of Darlington now rested entirely on the connexion with Dickens, and the filial anxiety of Amelia soon discovered that important secret.

At the same time, Sawyer Dickens, with his father, perceived the numerous advantages that must accrue from a relationship with the family of Darlington, in the event of his death, and urged with importunity his pretensions to the gentle Amelia.—They were married.—Mr. Darlington lived to bless their nuptials, and then sunk with resignation to that grave, which the indiscretions of a beloved son had prematurely prepared.

The heart of old Dickens was now without a wish: he beheld the work of his hands,

and rejoiced. From penury itself he had arisen to a level, in point of fortune, with the richest men of his age, and he saw his son firmly established in a concern that added every year immense accumulation to his already overgrown fortune. He lived to see that son the father of a son, and then his career of avarice was closed for ever.

Through life he had suffered no pain, he had enjoyed no pleasure, from the intellectual part of his being : for in him the accumulation of wealth was not a passion, but merely an instinct, which afforded him only a similar enjoyment to that, which the indulgence of gluttony yields to its grovelling votaries. In death he experienced neither mental terror nor hope ; his corporeal sufferings engrossed his whole essence of being, except that in short intervals of ease he would exhort his son to preserve and to increase that wealth, which it had been the chief end of his existence to create. The

widow Dickens survived her husband only a few months; and these three deaths left Mr. Sawyer Dickens, as before stated, one of the wealthiest commoners in England.

Education had given him advantages to which his father ever remained a stranger: and his introduction, at an early period of life, to the polite and intelligent circle of Mr. Darlington's acquaintance afforded him a view of the world never seen by his sire. The amiable qualities and the refined accomplishments of his Amelia were also charms, that wrought an almost magical effect upon the nature of a Dickens. Insensibly he became the well-informed man, the polished gentleman, and, by degrees, the combined influence of his manners and his purse introduced Mr. Sawyer Dickens into the very highest circles of fortune, rank, and fashion.

He had attained his thirty-second year, and was in the zenith of his influence and

notoriety, in the year seventeen hundred and eighty-five, the summer of which his family had passed at Brighton; and it was to this family that Laurence and his son were now sailing.

CHAPTER III.

AN ACT OF OSTENTATION.

“MAMMA, mamma!” said master Dickens, running to his mother, “I have heard such a strange story about a poor little child and a blackamoor!”

“Indeed!” said Mrs. Dickens, “and what is this wonderful tale?”

He then related, in his childish manner, the story.

“And pray, my love, how did you learn this history?”

“Oh, mamma, Sally, the nursery-maid, told it just now: the groom told her all about it, and he heard it himself from the good fisherman. Wasn’t it very good of him to take care of the poor little baby?”

“Very good, indeed, my love.”

At that instant Mr. Dickens entered the library.

"Augustus has been relating a strange adventure that happened during the storm last night," said Mrs. Dickens.

"I have just heard the whole affair," replied Mr. Dickens, "and, I dare say, with considerable embellishments, from La Tour, as he was tying my hair."

They were now joined by several of the company then on a visit at the villa, who had all received different accounts of Laurence's simple narrative to the groom.

The weather was fine; and it was just a pleasant drive from their villa to Laurence's hut; and as no particular engagement stood for that morning, the whole party resolved to make the indulgence of their curiosity the *divertissement* of the moment.

The splendor and rank of the party who now arrived at the fisherman's hut occasioned considerable embarrassment to the astonished

inhabitants. Dame Laurence was sitting in her garden with the infant stranger on her lap, while her own child was playing at her feet. Laurence and his son were mending their nets, which were hung on the paling of the garden to dry.

“So, my good fellow,” said Mr. Dickens, “you have had a strange adventure here!”

“Is this the child?” inquired Mrs. Dickens, taking the infant in her arms: “What a beautiful little creature!”

The ladies of the party thronged round her, while the gentlemen entered the hut with Laurence to take a view of the corpse of the unfortunate Chinese. Every individual present formed his own conjecture upon the subject, and all with equal probability. That the vessel had foundered was beyond all doubt, no signs of a wreck being visible; and that the boat which Laurence had descried in the storm had upset was equally certain, as it had been met with

at sea, keel upwards, that morning; but there was no name inscribed on it, nor any thing peculiar in its formation, that could designate the ship or kind of ship to which it had belonged.

The appearance of the deceased was, however, in all respects that of a Chinese servant or navigator employed on board East India vessels; and Laurence himself had no doubt but that the vessel which foundered was the *Indiaman* which he had seen in the early part of the evening.

Turning from the ill-fated Chinese to the infant whom he had saved, the company now exhausted conjectures again upon whether he was English or French; of poor or wealthy origin; of noble or mean birth; the little innocent himself smiling all the while, as if in mockery of their idle guesses.

“Well, but what is to become of the dear little creature?” said Mrs. Dickens: “Be he of whatever country he may, rich

er poor, mean or noble, I never saw a more lovely child.—How old do you think he is?"

Various ages were named, but the average of opinion seemed to fix his age at twelve months, or rather more.

Again the question was started, What was to be done with this little foundling of the sea? One of the party at length proposed a subscription for the purpose of advertising the existence of the child, of endeavouring to trace his parents or friends; or, if necessary, to support him during his incapacity to provide for himself.

"A most excellent idea," said a road-eater of Mr. Dickens: "I second that motion with all my heart. Here's my guinea to begin; only I beg to propose that Mr. Sawyer Dickens be requested to be treasurer."

"You are infinitely obliging, sir," said the man of wealth, with a sneer, highly piqued at a compliment which, unfortu-

nately for the speaker, had too much of trade in it to please Mr. Dickens, who was endeavouring at this epoch to sink the banker as much as possible in the member of parliament. Ostentation and pique therefore combined their instant operations upon his heart, and he continued, with a purse-proud smile, to say, "I have already made up my mind as to what I conceive to be the duty of a man of my fortune on this occasion; and I really think, that, without the aid of your guinea, sir, I may venture to say that the little brat sha'n't starve." Then, turning to Mrs. Dickens, "What do you say, my love?—Would it rain us to provide for the child?"

"That 's very good indeed," said the sycophant who proposed the treasurership; "when all the world knows that Mr. Sawyer Dickens might build an hospital in every county, and then be the richest man in England."

Whatever might have been the motive

which inspired Mr. Dickens, his amiable wife instantly embraced the opportunity of exercising the benevolence which constantly warmed her bosom. With a suavity of manners peculiarly her own, she expressed how delightful a gratification the proposal of Mr. Dickens afforded her ; and added, that she would zealously assist in any means of discovering the father or any of the kindred of the infant stranger.

It was now proposed to return to the villa ; and the whole party were quitting the little garden of the Laurences, when Mrs. Dickens, lingering behind, slipped a present into the hands of dame Laurence. This example electrified the party :—purses were drawn out in an instant, as if by word of command, and several golden tokens of this adventure were left in the hands of the benevolent fisherman and his family.

The patronage of Mr. Sawyer Dickens conferred immediate notoriety upon the nameless little stranger. His story interested all

the lovers of marvels and mysteries, and afforded to the curious crowd who visited the marine-villa most fruitful materials for romantic conjectures: to mere conjecture, indeed, the origin and history of this infant continued to be confined.

The season at Brighton closed; the Dickenses returned to Cavendish-square; the novelty of the adventure gradually faded; and the story of the Chinese and child gave place to some new object of public curiosity.

Mr. Dickens, wholly engrossed by the pursuit of two objects, the increase of his wealth and the acquisition of a title, had almost forgotten the subject of his ostentatious bounty, when he one day accidentally caught the little orphan in the arms of Mrs. Dickens.

"Is that child here still!" exclaimed he.

"Poor little thing, where should it be?" said the tender-hearted Mrs. Dickens.

"Surely, madam, your own children

have claims enough upon your time and affection! I certainly did not mean to adopt the child as my heir, when I undertook to save him from the work-house."

"What must be done with the poor fellow then, Mr. Dickens? I have a hundred times thought to ask your instruction; but I have so little of your time that——"

"Send him to some old woman to nurse; let him be provided with necessaries, but no superfluities. How old do you suppose him to be?"

"About two years old."

"Well, send him into the country for five or six years, and then we'll get him into some charity-school."

Away whirled Mr. Dickens. His excellent lady once more took the child on her lap. "Poor orphan!" exclaimed she, "How sweet are thy innocent smiles! how brilliantly joyful are thy laughing eyes! Ah! how is it now with thy parents? Are their eyes closed for ever; or are they now stream-

ing with tears, wrung from hearts that throb with a painful anxiety for thee?—Poor babe!" continued she, kissing him again as he curled his little fingers round one of her own, "thou hast been almost miraculously rescued from the stormy billows of the ocean: may the same omnipotent hand still be exerted to preserve thee from all the dangerous storms and all the fatal shoals of this life's vice and error! The fate that directed thee to my arms I cannot but regard as a charge from Providence to supply the place of parents to thee; and to the utmost of my power I will discharge the trust."

This soliloquy was followed by a train of thought relative to the person with whom she should intrust her little charge.

While endeavouring to recollect such a person, she was aroused from her reveries by the announcement of Mrs. Enfield.

Mrs. Enfield was the widow of a physician, who had just emerged from the obscurity to which talents without fortune are

doomed in that profession, and who had just risen above the incumbrance of debts which an expensive education, and the necessity of maintaining a genteel appearance, had loaded him with, when, in the discharge of his duty as physician to a dispensary, he took a typhus fever, and died. In his lifetime Dr. Enfield had been eminently serviceable to Mrs. Dickens; and when, after his decease, it was found that all the property he left was scarcely sufficient to satisfy the demands of creditors, she interested herself in promoting a subscription for his widow and her infant little girl. By her influence and exertions, a sum was collected, which purchased an annuity of one hundred pounds, for their two lives; and to this good deed Mrs. Dickens added another. Among the other additions and improvements which Mr. Sawyer Dickens was making upon his Cumberland estate, he had then lately erected several new cottages, with a view to strengthen his interest in the county election. One

of these cottages Mrs. Dickens had begged for her protégée, Mrs. Enfield, where, rent-free, she might reside, and obtain from her small annuity many more comforts than the same sum would procure in the vicinity of London. For this cottage Mrs. Enfield was the next day to set out, and she had now called to take leave of her kind-hearted patroness.

She was a woman of handsome form, about thirty, with a face marked by sensibility, but without beauty. She was dressed in plain deep mourning, and carried in her arms her little girl about twelve months old.

"I have intruded upon you, my dear madam, before I leave town, to offer you once more the assurance of that gratitude which I deeply feel for all your goodness, but which indeed I cannot express."

"My dear Mrs. Enfield, you are very good to look in upon me; but pray do not cause me to repent the little services I have been

able to render you, by thus repeatedly making me ashamed of them. Do take a chair. You must know, I am in great trouble, Mrs. Enfield, about this little pet, who has actually fastened himself so strongly upon my affections, that he, in some degree, rivals my own children. You know Mr. Dickens's positive disposition—he has just been commanding me to send the poor fellow away—and indeed I believe he is right. It would certainly be an act of injustice and folly to bring up the child upon an equality with our own children, when their future prospects in life are so different:—they born to the first fortunes in the kingdom; and he, poor fellow, the heir to nothing, but what Nature bestows upon all her sons. Yet the difficulty is to procure him a proper asylum. I have never trusted my own children from under my daily inspection; and, do you know, I can't help thinking that the spirits of this poor orphan's parents (supposing them to be

no more) expect from me as much as if he were my own! But Mr. Dickens will be obeyed. If I knew any body—"

The grateful heart of Mrs. Enfield beat with pleasure, as a thought instantaneously struck her.

"If I could flatter myself," said she, "that you would think him properly confided to my care, dear madam, how happy would it render your poor widow to have some little chance of evincing her gratitude to you by her unremitting attention to your charge!"

"Are you serious in this kind suggestion, Mrs. Enfield?—You know not what a weight you would take from my mind, if I could bring myself to think the generous offer was not made at the expense of your own comfort and convenience!"

"Quite the reverse, I assure you! Sweet little fellow! he will lighten the sorrows of my heart; he will call my thoughts from the grave, dear madam, where, in

spite of the voice of reason and religion; they too often wander; he will make me think daily of one whose example shall be my study, and whose goodness shall be my theme."

"Nay, now you are going from the point; but I shall keep you to it, believe me. How happy you have made me! how fortunate your call! You cannot conceive what a weight is removed from my mind." She then embraced the little urchin, and, placing him on his feet, continued—"Go, go, then, Edward: we have christened him Edward Montagu, Mrs. Enfield. Go, dear Edward, to your—Alas! what? Here is another perplexity. The first endearing syllable which almost every infant is taught to lisp is ma' or pa': poor little creature, what shall we teach him to call you?"

"Oh, let him call me mamma Enfield; and let him even believe me to be so, at least till he arrives at an age when it may be prudent to reveal to him all we know of his

story. I shall, I assure you, make no distinction between my Eliza and your Edward, which may teach them that they are not both my children."

Mrs. Dickens expressed her thanks with heart-felt warmth. Joy, pure as the angels' feel, filled her heart, and flew to her tongue. She did not, however, spend the morning in vain prattle. Solid arrangements of a pecuniary nature were formed; and Mrs. Dickens, after a thousand caresses, at length committed him to the protection of the worthy Mrs. Enfield.

"You will let me hear from you occasionally," said Mrs. Dickens, as the porter held the hall-door in his hand. "It is very probable in the course of next summer we may visit the Cumberland estate. But whenever I come, let me find you all happy, I charge you!"

CHAPTER IV.

A DISCLOSURE.

IT is scarcely to be doubted that the disposition and temper of man receive a lasting stamp from the impression which is formed upon the infant mind by the first perceptions of exterior objects.

The scenery around the dwelling of Mrs. Enfield was not simply beautiful; it was grand, magnificent, sublime.

The cottage itself was small; but its internal decorations, and the charming arrangement of the little territory annexed to it, in a short time displayed the fine taste and elegant mind of its owner. It was situated in a valley, on the borders of an expansive lake, over which the eye gradually wandered to a vast amphitheatre of mountains, rising one above an-

other, each lessening as the others rose. On an eminence to the right, at the distance of half a mile from the cottage, were seen the ancient towers of Beauchamp Abbey, fast falling to decay, and then inhabited only by a few servants of the once powerful family of Beauchamps. To the left, and nearly on a level with the mouldering pile called Beauchamp Abbey, the growing palace of Mr. Sawyer Dickens rose daily higher and higher, till the grand portico, with white marble colonnades, showed itself above the green waving branches of his newly planted park; and by a contrast of all that is light, tasteful, elegant, and decorative, with the abbey's "heavy mouldered walls," seemed to deride the fallen grandeur of that building which once had been

..... a pile complete;

Big with the vanity of state.

Nearer to the cottage were sprinkled the newly erected tenements of Mr. Dickens,

who had divided some hundred acres into small farms.

The back view from the cottage varied little in its scenery from that already described, except that through an opening in the mountains, the glittering spires of the town of — were sometimes visible, at the distance of seven miles, which was the nearest market-town.

Such was the birth-place of young Edward's first ideas. Here he lived almost in a state of solitude. His world consisted of the space his eyes surveyed; and all his knowledge of his own species was confined to Mrs. Enfield and her daughter, whom he loved with filial and fraternal affection, and to about a dozen other persons in the neighbourhood, for all of whom he felt kindness in return for the little benefits they bestowed upon him.

He grew a beautiful child; and the mild manners of Mrs. Enfield were reflected in

his behaviour. He was therefore a favourite with all who happened to see him ; and there was not a human being known to Edward from whom he had not received some little present of toys or fruits, which he never failed to offer to, or to share with, Eliza.

Outward objects had hitherto wholly engrossed his attention. Concerning all that he saw he would ask a thousand questions, and would frequently puzzle Mrs. Enfield extremely by the acuteness of his inquiries ; but of himself—of the origin of his own existence—of the nature of his own individual feelings, he was not yet egotist enough once to think.

More than five years passed away without any visit from Mrs. Dickens or any of the family. The excellent lady frequently corresponded with the worthy Mrs. Enfield, and from her letters the latter learned the causes which, from sum-

mer to summer, deferred the intended journey to Cumberland.

Edward had now attained his eighth year, reckoned from the day of his preservation, and supposing him to have been on that day one year old. Mrs. Dickens had, on every anniversary of that day, continued to send some token of her remembrance to her charge, which was always accompanied by some present for Eliza. Edward had been told that these presents came from a good lady, who was his particular and best friend; but as the same good lady was, as far as he knew, as much the friend of Eliza, this circumstance never very deeply impressed him.

It was on the seventh return of this day that Mrs. Enfield received the customary packets, but was surprised to observe a coronet impressed on the wax that sealed the accompanying letter. Upon unclosing the letter she learned that the great object of

Mr. Sawyer Dickens's ambition was at length accomplished, and that he had been created earl of Roseville, baron Barton, and that the friend and benefactress of herself and Edward was now countess of Roseville.— The new title however did not disguise the old friend: the same benevolence, the same humility of mind distinguished every sentence of her letter. The concluding paragraph stated that the family intended visiting the Lakes that autumn, and that in the course of their tour they should inspect the now almost finished palace, which was henceforth to be denominated Roseville Park.

The imagination of Edward was now to be stimulated by new events. In less than a week after the receipt of her letter, lady Roseville, with a splendid equipage and retinue, alarmed the rustic inhabitants of the valley by a visit to the cottage of Mrs. Enfield. Accompanied by her son and daughter, she alighted from her carriage, and embraced with affectionate fervour the

improved Edward; and cordially rejoiced to see the widow Enfield restored to tranquillity, and enjoying competence. Her own son, now styled lord Barton, was in his thirteenth year, and felt all the effects of that importance which he conceived his new dignity shed around him.

"Bless me!" exclaimed his young lordship—"bless me! can this fine fellow really be the poor bantling that blacky picked out of the sea seven years ago? How he has grown!"

"Hush, my love!" said lady Roseville, shocked beyond description at this abrupt attack.

"What does he mean, mamma," said Edward to Mrs. Enfield, "by my being picked out of the sea?"

"That's a good one!" exclaimed the young lord. "What, does he think this lady is his mamma?"

The whole of this dialogue passed much more rapidly than it can be related; while,

in considerable perplexity, lady Roseville and Mrs Enfield looked at each other without speaking, and not daring to notice the inquiring looks of poor Edward, who stood silent and abashed.

Her ladyship, with a quickness of decision, broke the silence:—

“No, my sweet little fellow, Mrs. Enfield is not indeed your mamma; but she is your very good friend, and you must love her as much as if she really were your mother.”

Edward still remained silent; but he let drop the hand of Eliza, which he had held till then, and looked fearfully in the face of Mrs. Enfield, as if anxious yet dreading to hear her voice.

The tender-hearted widow was too much affected by the evidently painful sensibility of the child to utter a word.

“A’n’t you indeed my mamma?” at length said he.

“No, no; not your real *right-earnest* mamma,” said the good woman, in his own

childish language, kissing him affectionately ;
“ but I love you as much as if I were.”

“ Is this lady, then, my mamma ?” said Edward with simplicity, looking at lady Roseville ; “ and is she come to take me away from you and Ediza ?”

The young lord laughed heartily, and exclaimed, “ That’s excellent !”

Lady Roseville frowned at the levity of this forward boy, who had been brazened for two years at Eton ; and turning to the trembling Edward, whose little heart throbbed with emotions so new, so painfully surprising that they brought tears into his eyes, she took his hand and drew him close to her bosom.

“ I should be proud to have so good a little boy for my son as you are, Edward ; but I am not your mamma. No, my dear child, we are afraid your poor mamma died at sea when you were very, very young——”

With wonderful quickness of perception the child interrupted her—

“ Ah ! now, then, I know what that

young gentleman means by saying I was picked out of the sea by blacky : my poor mamma was drowned. Oh, why did not blacky pick up my mamma instead of me ?”

“ Sweet child !” exclaimed the countess, embracing him.

After a short pause, during which the mind of Edward seemed labouring with inquiry much beyond his years, he said, suddenly—

“ Where is blacky ? Where is he ?”

“ He is dead and buried,” said lady Roseville : “ but listen to me, Edward,” continued she, observing that the uncertainty of his origin, which had thus unfortunately been made the first exercise of his reasoning powers, pained him extremely ; and justly concluding that a simple statement of his story, in language adapted to his tender years, was the best remedy, and could not be too quickly administered,—“ Listen to me, Edward,” said she, “ and I will tell you how it

has happened that you live with this good lady, who has been another mamma to you. When you were a very very little child, not much more than twelve months old, you and your parents, as we suppose, were on board a ship which was lost at sea in a storm. Of all the people in the ship only one was able to swim to the shore, and that was a Chinese, a blackamoor, as my son has called him: this humane man brought you from the ship to land, or you would have been drowned too; he however conveyed you, half dead, to the hut of a kind-hearted fisherman, who received and restored you. The poor Chinese could not speak English, and therefore could not make himself understood by the fisherman's family, and before the next morning he died; you were thus left a helpless little stranger. It happened that at that time our family resided at the very place where the Chinese brought you, and lord Roseville was so good as to take upon him-

self the care of you, and to place you with this good lady ; who has, I am sure, been a very good mamma to you."

The child seemed bewildered by attempting to follow a train of thoughts occasioned by the information which had been thus abruptly forced upon his tender mind. He remained silent when lady Roseville paused, fixing his starting eyes upon a portrait of Dr. Enfield which hung over the chimney. At length he said sorrowfully to Eliza—

" Ah, Eliza, that was your dear papa ; but he was not mine ! May be I shall never know who was !"

A flood of tears followed this affecting speech.

" What extraordinary sensibility, for so young a mind !" said lady Roseville.

" He is indeed a prodigy," said Mrs. Enfield : " I have frequently been astonished by proofs of his feeling, and his understanding, far above his years. I have ever dreaded this moment ; but when the first

effects of such a discovery shall have subsided, I think we shall have reason to congratulate ourselves and him, that all future disappointments have been thus prevented. Come, my dear Edward, look up: this is your good friend; this is lady Roseville, who has been indeed a benevolent mamma to you, as well as a husband to me!"

"Let us change the subject," said lady Roseville. "Have you, in your rambles, ever reached so far as the Park, Edward? have you seen the workmen there? There are some fine paintings now executing on some of the cieling and walls. Will you ride with us there? Lord Roseville will be glad to see you."

"Not now, if you please, ma'am," said Edward sorrowfully; "my head aches very much."

Lady Roseville, whose goodness of heart was almost equalled by the excellence of her judgment, perceived the distress into which the unintentional discovery at that time

had thrown the cottagers ; for Mrs. Enfield and Eliza deeply participated in the sorrows of Edward, took a hasty leave, and promised to see them next morning.

“ Don’t cry, my little fellow,” said lord Barton, who had been most awkwardly twirling a watch-chain round during the conversation : “ my father will, I’m sure, provide for you ; you won’t want for any thing ; don’t cry, my man.”

His sister, who was possessed of exquisite sensibility, had silently sympathized with the poor orphan in his sorrows, and, with sweet affability, taking his hand, put it to her lips, and simply said “ God bless you, Edward !” while a tear fell warm from her beautiful cheek upon the very place where her lips had impressed the kiss.

The mind of Edward received a shock from this abrupt discovery of his mysterious origin, which not all the soothing tenderness of Mrs. Enfield was able wholly to repair. He seemed, as it were, instantaneously

altered from the gay and sprightly child to the reserved and melancholy boy. He sat dumb as a statue for some time after lady Roseville's departure; then, starting as from a reverie, asked question after question respecting the story of his preservation, and his present situation. In vain Mrs. Enfield attempted to divert his attention to other objects, and even the kind assiduities of Eliza rather increased than assuaged his sorrow. He never ceased inquiring till he had learned all that was known concerning himself.

The night came, and Edward retired to his bed, for the first time, with a mind oppressed. His sleep for the first time was disturbed by dreams, in which he saw the shipwreck which had so powerfully impressed his imagination; he saw his lifeless parents floating on the turbulent billows; he saw his generous preserver, as his quick fancy had formed him; he felt himself borne through the rough dashing waves; he beheld the benevolent Laurences; and at length

he fancied himself introduced to his great benefactor, in whose presence he felt an awe so painful that he awoke disturbed and terrified.

While they were at breakfast the following morning a footman delivered a note to Mrs. Enfield, from lady Roseville, requesting her company, with Eliza and Edward, at the Park.

As they approached the superb mansion of his benefactors, the imagination of Edward pictured to him the austere form of lord Roseville, which he had beheld in his dream, and he trembled and turned pale. His awe was far from lessened by the splendour of the palace he now for the first time entered, which, even in its unfinished state, was sufficient to have dazzled even a mature imagination.

Encouraged by the smiles of Mrs. Enfield, however, the little dependent ascended the white marble staircase that led to a suite of rooms in one wing of the building, which

was fitted up for the temporary reception of the family.

As the doors of a small saloon were unfolded, the countess and her lovely daughter were discovered sitting at breakfast. The eyes of Edward travelled swiftly round the apartment. The earl was not there. His heart felt relieved from a weight of apprehension, and it even beat with joy when lady Roseville advanced to meet them, and apologized for the abrupt departure of the earl, who, with his son, had set off to travel the first stage towards London on horseback. This intelligence delighted Edward, who now gratified, without restraint, the inquisitive turn of his mind by a minute observation of the new wonders of art around him. The exquisite paintings, the magnificent furniture and decorations of the room, afforded him a mental recreation which for the moment absorbed all recollections of himself.

The rules of proportion, and the orders of art, may be acquired by lessons ; but that,

discernment, or at least that relish of the beautiful or the sublime, which is vaguely denominated taste, is a gift of nature. The seeds of taste were, even at this early period of his life, implanted in the mind of Edward, who devoured with ecstasy all the beauties, the elegancies, and splendours which the power of wealth had profusely scattered about the palace of lord Roseville.

When to this gratification were added the sweetly soothing tenderness of lady Roseville, and the artless and affectionate efforts to amuse of her daughter lady Emily; when the former struck the wires of her harp; when the latter opened to him her portfolio of drawings, the productions of her own pencil; when she explained to him the names and properties of plants and flowers, or described to him the internal view of a theatre, Edward's heart glowed within him.

Eliza Enfield, who shared in all the attentions shown to Edward, though older than him by some years, was comparatively in-

sensible to these pleasures. The objects she saw were new, and they certainly afforded her pleasure ; but it was not, as in Edward, a rapturous, an absorbing pleasure ; her mind was amused, but her heart was uninterested ; while in him the whole scenery engendered new feelings, new wishes, new hopes, and new fears.

At length the day closed. How early did Edward experience the fickleness of human nature ! The very place which he had approached with a reluctance amounting almost to terror, he now quitted with regret so keen, that he sighed as he reflected on the narrow space and humble ornaments of Mrs. Enfield's cottage ; and sighed again as he contrasted the accomplishments and elegant deportment of lady Roseville and her daughter, with those of Mrs. Enfield and Eliza, whom, till to-day, he had considered as the most perfect of beings. It was therefore with inexpressible joy that he heard lady Roseville say, at their departure, that

she should not quit the Park these three days, and that she hoped to see them daily during her stay.

These three days were passed at Roseville Park in a manner no less delightful to Edward than the first, and on the fourth the countess and her daughter quitted Cumberland for the metropolis.

The young mind of her protégé had received, however, from the scenes and society of even these few days, a tone of elegance which increased with his increasing years.

Nor was the impression which lady Emily's accomplishments and captivating manners made upon his memory and affections less forcible. Her unaffected smiles, the speaking loveliness of her bright blue eyes, her finely moulded form, were ever present with him. Eliza ceased to interest him as she had done before he knew the lovely Emily. Eliza was a good-tempered and a pretty girl, and was far from deficient in intellectual acquirements: but she wanted

that glowing animation of beauty, and that sparkling fire of mind, which Emily possessed. Eliza could perform a sonata upon the piano with considerable expression and effect; but this was a picture of still life, in comparison with the enchantment of the senses produced by lady Emily, as she exhibited her graceful form and limbs in dancing to the sounds which she herself extracted from the tambourine.

“O! how I should like to see lady Emily dancing again upon the lawn!” would Edward frequently exclaim. At other times he would say, “O! Eliza, I wish you played the tambourine like lady Emily;” or, “I wish you could draw like lady Emily.”

A large portion of his boyish thoughts was occupied by lady Emily; and the whole of his contemplations were divided between admiration of her, and fruitless surmises upon his own origin.

While the strength of these impressions remained, his walks were always directed to

Roseville Park. Here he grew acquainted with the various artisans and artists, which were employed in completing and decorating that modern palace. He would almost tire them with questions respecting lord Roseville and his family ; while all the information which he gleaned tended to inspire him with increased awe of his patron, with increased veneration and affection for his lady and his daughter.

CHAPTER V.

A STRANGER.

ONE evening, when Edward was rather more than ten years old, as he was returning alone from one of these visits, he observed, at the verge of the park, an elderly gentleman, plainly dressed, who was leaning on his cane, and contemplating the elegant structure which Edward had just quitted.

“Tell me, young gentleman,” said the stranger, “whom does this fine mansion belong to?”

“The earl of Roseville, sir.”

“Roseville—Roseville? That must be a new creation—I do not recollect the title—But pray,—you live hereabouts, I presume,—can you tell me where Darlington Hall is? I have been absent from these parts some years, and may have mistaken; but surely this should be the spot.”

“Darlington Hall stood, sir, on the very site of that new palace.”

“Stood! young gentleman, do I comprehend you? Do you mean that the old hospitable mansion of Darlington has been demolished to make room for this ephemeral temple of luxury? Spirits of our departed ancestors, how must ye scowl upon the antics of your children!”

Edward, who did not consider the concluding apostrophe to have been addressed to him, was proceeding homeward, when the stranger called to him—

“Sir, I beg your pardon, but you would much oblige me if you would direct me where I may obtain some refreshment. I once knew this part of the world perfectly well; but really every thing here has undergone such a wonderful metamorphosis, that I can scarcely credit my own senses.”

“I am going home, sir; it is but about a quarter of a mile further; you can see a little white cottage at the edge of the lake, sir; I live there; and I am sure Mrs. En-

field will be very much pleased with me for conducting you to whatever entertainment our house affords."

"You are a kind-hearted youth. I thank you, and will accept your offer."

"Or, if you had rather, sir," said Edward, "I am acquainted at the Park; and the housekeeper will, I am sure, receive you with politeness, though perhaps not with so much kindness as Mrs. Enfield."

"No, no, no. When the choice to a poor weary traveller is a palace or a cottage, he must be a novice indeed who prefers the former. Come, my kind friend," continued the stranger, patting Edward on the head, "to the cottage, to the cottage."

At the door of the cottage they were received by Mrs. Enfield.

"I have been induced, madam," said the stranger, "to take this liberty, by the ingenuous assurances of this young gentleman, who tells me that you never turn the weary traveller from your door."

"No, never, do you, dear ma'am?" said Edward: "and this gentleman seems very tired."

"To confess the truth," said he, "my young friend, I am not only much fatigued, but greatly disappointed. I have travelled from Scarborough in stage coaches, the last of which I quitted at the turnpike-gate, where the road turns off to Darlington; and I had walked ten miles in the hope of meeting a kind reception at the hall, when, to my astonishment, I found that the noble pile was levelled to the dust!"

Mrs. Enfield was never seen to more advantage than when employed in acts of hospitality. Scarcely had the gentleman entered the neat little parlour, when the table was spread with home-made wines, fruit, bread, butter, and cheese. Edward took his hat and stick, Eliza placed a chair for him, and Mrs. Enfield with unaffected smiles invited him to the repast.

"This scene, madam," said the stranger, seating himself, "almost makes me doubt

an opinion I have adopted, that disinterested benevolence is a stranger on earth."

"The circumstances must have been of a peculiarly melancholy nature, I presume, sir, that could give birth to that opinion. I trust there are numerous instances of disinterested benevolence to be met with daily."

"Ah! madam," said the stranger, "you live here in the bosom of retirement, accustomed only to the simplicity of nature, and I marvel not at your sentiments."

"But that I do live here, sir, is one proof at least of the existence of disinterested goodness." Then with overflowing gratitude of heart she broke forth into a brief narrative of lady Roseville's generous conduct, and concluded with the warmest eulogium of her patroness.

"She has acted like a Darlington; she is worthy of her sire."

"You knew the Darlings, then?"

"Yes, I knew them well. But who is this earl of Roseville, to whom you tell me she is married?"

“ He was a Mr. Sawyer Dickens, a man of immense wealth.”

“ Which wealth has purchased him a title! —is it not so ?”

Mrs. Enfield smiled.

“ Wealth, madam, has become in these days of corruption a substitute for every virtue; and though I did not know that he was now a peer, I am not altogether unacquainted with the circumstances which brought about the union of the waiter’s son with a daughter of the house of Darlington.”

As the stranger finished these words, he passed his hand over his eyebrows to conceal his tears. He continued—

“ Forgive me, madam : the name of Darlington recalls to memory such scenes, and revives such painful feelings in this heart, that I cannot conceal my griefs.”

He arose, and walked towards the window, which commanded a view of Beauchamp Abbey. He started—“ There again, there again,” said the stranger, turning round to Mrs. Enfield, “ the sight of these

old towers—Oh, how painful; how heart-rending!”

Mrs. Enfield attempted to say something of a soothing nature; but the stranger, without listening to her, muttered some words wholly unintelligible: then, recollecting himself, he said—

“Kind, good lady, be not alarmed; do not suppose, from this behaviour, that a maniac trespasses upon your hospitality; no, nor a drivelling idiot, who means to spend his days in unavailing sorrow: no, madam, these tears have started, I assure you, bold mutineers against my will as much as against my reason, and I trust they are the last that will disgrace my cheek.”

He paused a few moments, and then more calmly resumed—

“Ah, madam! many, many years have rolled over me since, in the happy days of infancy and childhood, I dwelt among the scenery of this romantic spot. Yon abbey and its venerable towers, this tranquil lake, these awful mountains, were the first objects

which impressed my opening mind. The sight of them brings back the unalloyed delight, the pure and heartfelt joys that then were mine; and, oh, God! the contrast of what I since have suffered, what I still endure——”

The energy with which the stranger spoke, and the abruptness with which he left unfinished his sentence, added to a wild yet melancholy countenance, almost induced Mrs. Enfield to believe that he was indeed that maniac, which he had himself feared she would suppose him to be.

Edward, who had at first felt pleasure in listening to him, now instinctively moved further from him, and nearer to Mrs. Enfield. The stranger observed it.

“Nay, my good fellow, you surely are not afraid of me! Come, give me your hand; that’s a brave fellow. Pray, madam, how old is your son?”

“Edward is almost nine years old, sir; but he is not my son.”

"Your nephew then, perhaps?"

"No, sir, he is no relation."

"Indeed! Some relation then, I presume? What is your name, sir?" taking him by the hand.

"Edward, sir."

"Edward; well, but what else?"

Edward blushed; he withdrew his hand, burst into tears, and left the room, followed by Eliza.

"What have I done!" exclaimed the stranger. "Forgive me, madam, if ignorantly I have touched some chord that has produced this pain."

"You have innocently hurt his feelings, sir. He is in fact a foundling; and he knows it."

"A foundling! Poor fellow!" said the stranger. "How shall I make him amends? But he should have been named after the person who found him, or the place where he was found, and have been kept ignorant of so distressing a want."

"Such certainly was lady Roseville's design ; but——"

"Lady Roseville !" interrupted the stranger, "Amelia Darlington you mean. What of her, madam ? What *had* she, or what *has* she, to do with this poor boy ?"

The impatient and impetuous manner of the stranger again alarmed Mrs. Enfield, and she hesitated in her reply.

"Tell me, madam, and I beseech you tell me truth too,—What share has Amelia Darlington in the destiny of this foundling, as you call him ?"

"Sir, she is his best friend, his benefactress."

"Indeed !" said he, starting with surprise—

"So, so, so!—well, well!—What should surprise a man of my experience ? Yet,—no,—it cannot be ; I wrong her ; it is impossible ! She was all purity—and yet, so was—Who knows the heart of a woman ! You tell me that she is your best friend, and his best friend. This foundling may have a natural claim to the care of Amelia, eh, Mrs. Enfield ?"

Mrs. Enfield could not immediately comprehend the innuendo contained in this speech; but as the stranger continued to fix his eyes upon her with a mysterious meaning, the conviction of his disrespectful suspicion flashed upon her mind, and roused an indignation which she made no effort to conceal. She rose from her chair, rung the bell, and saying haughtily, "My servant, sir, will attend you," was leaving the room, when the stranger quickly followed her, and, snatching her gown, exclaimed in a tone of distress—

"Madam, madam, if you have a heart, forgive me; allow something, I beseech you, to a man whom misery and despair have almost crazed."

"The insult to myself I could easily forgive; but when your gross allusion involves the honour of a lady whose purity is unsullied as an angel's, it becomes me to say, that our acquaintance is not of a nature, sir, to warrant any further communication."

"I cannot suffer you, my good lady, to de-

part under the influence of so much displeasure. Pronounce my pardon then, and believe me, that your own grateful heart can never never feel that ardour of admiration, that chaste respect for Amelia Darlington which this bosom cherishes. I shall detest myself for suffering a thought so derogatory to her angelic virtue, even for a moment."

Softened in her displeasure by this display of unfeigned sorrow, and stimulated by her love of lady Roseville, still further to confirm the stranger in the persuasion of her innocence and goodness, Mrs. Enfield closed the door she held in her hand, and proceeded :

"The concern which you appear to take, sir, in the character of one of the best of women, makes me anxious to convince you how grossly your suspicion has injured it. The history of poor Edward is singular ; I will briefly relate it to you, and you will then perceive that the interest which lady Roseville has taken in his unfortunate destiny

is in every respect most honourable and praise-worthy."

"Oh, it must be so! I am a hasty fool! Pray, madam, proceed."

Mrs. Enfield then began to narrate the history of the storm and shipwreck; and had proceeded to that part of the tale where the Chinese entered the hut of Laurence with the infant, when she perceived the countenance of the stranger convulsed with emotion.—She paused.

"Go on," exclaimed he.—"Say, was this child the boy I saw just now?"

"Edward was that child. Why do you tremble so, sir?"

"A Chinese, you say;—the Sussex coast; the date of the year;—the month August;—the boy then about twelve months old;—Curse on the chance that brought him hither!"

He paused; he clasped his hands together, and raised his eyes as if in silent ejaculation.

Mrs. Enfield was overcome with astonishment. She felt inspired with the conviction that she saw before her the father of Edward, thus miraculously brought under the same roof with his child. Ere she could speak, the stranger again exclaimed,

“ Yes! It shall be so—It shall be so.—Farewell, farewell !”

“ Oh stay, sir, I beseech you, stay !”

“ Not here a moment, madam, nor in the same county another day.”

“ Will you not explain yourself? Consider, sir, the anguish of such conjectures as those you have created.”

“ Do you, good woman, talk of anguish? What is your suspense, what is your anguish, to the tortures of a heart lacerated as is mine, and bleeding at every pore? Nay, hold me not; my purposes are never shaken, madam. My heart is broken, but my will is stubborn still.”

“ Will you not see him ?”

"No,—not to redeem him from perdition would I see the——. Away! away!"

As he was rushing wildly out of the cottage, leaving his sentence unfinished, Edward crossed him in the path, and, hanging down his head, sought to avoid him.

A new resolution seized the seething mad-man: he caught hold of Edward with his left hand, and, keeping him at arm's length, riveted his eyes upon the countenance of the terrified boy. Mrs. Enfield had followed closely, and stood trembling near him. The stranger continued gazing silently for above a minute; then with his right hand he stroked back the curling ringlets which shaded Edward's forehead, and in a pathetic tone said,

"Yes, yes, the lineaments are hers; her eyes, her nose and mouth, the very curve of her lip,—plain enough hers. Yes; there's all the mother stamped upon thy face; but thy father, boy,—Ha! ha! ha! Go, go,

unfortunate!—Why did they save thee from the waves?"

Spurning from him the poor child as he spoke, he ran from him to a considerable distance. Suddenly he stopped, turned round, and beckoned to Edward, who, from a mixed impulse of terror and surprise, stood still. The stranger returned; and, with a smile like madness, exclaimed,

"I am wrong:—how could he help it, you know, madam, that his mother played the jilt? It's no crime of his, that she who bore him broke my heart."

"My mother! my mother!" exclaimed Edward: "Oh, sir, do you know my mother? Oh, pray, pray tell me who she is; where she is;—let me fly to her. Oh, good, dear sir, think what a dreadful thing it is to know nothing of one's parents!"

In the earnestness of supplication he knelt down and clasped the skirt of the stranger's coat, who turned away his head, and covered his face and his tears with his

hands, while his only answer to Edward was an agonized groan. Mrs. Enfield now added her entreaties that the stranger would explain the mystery of his conduct and expressions.

"Hither I came," said the stranger, "hither I came to seek seclusion's balm for a wounded heart. Here, buried from the notice of mankind, I hoped to find a secret resting-place, till death entirely relieves me from all the misery of retrospection. Oh! who could have conjectured, that on the very spot which I had chosen as the grave of recollection, I should encounter this living image of herself, to renew all the heart-rending ideas of what she was when pure as this resemblance of her beauties, while that resemblance itself is the very seal and evidence of her prostitution, and my shame! Yes, this boy, wonderful as it appears, is the son of my wife!"

"Oh, then *you* are my father," cried Edward, "and Providence has brought about this meeting!"

“I—I, your father!” said the stranger, breaking from the arms of Edward, which entwined his knees. “No,—poor wretch! Thou art the fruit of crime, the offspring of adultery! Thou hast no parents; for thy guilty mother and her paramour, thy father, perished in that hour when thou wast rescued from destruction.”

Edward, relinquishing his hold, fell prostrate on the earth.

Mrs. Enfield ran to his assistance; and the mysterious stranger, with a wild shriek of despair, smiting his forehead, exclaimed,

“Where, where shall I fly to escape from misery!” and in a moment he was out of sight.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OLD DOMESTIC.

MONTHS after months rolled on, adding hour to hour of cruel disappointment and keen regret to the heart of Edward, who could not relinquish the hope of seeing again the husband of his mother. The stranger, however, came not, and the heart of Edward sickened. In vain were all the attempts of Mrs. Enfield to remove from his susceptible mind the impression of melancholy occasioned by the words and manner of the mysterious Unknown. Nature had implanted in Edward a quickness of feeling, a sensibility which the peculiarities of his situation increased. The solitude in which he grew fostered the contemplative spirit with which he was endued. He had no

playmates but Eliza ; the children of their few neighbours being constantly employed in labour, to which Edward was wholly a stranger. Books became his companions. The library of Dr. Enfield, with the exception of medical books, had been preserved by his widow, and afforded to Edward the only amusement in which he indulged.

Thus were passed the first thirteen years of his life. The incident of the mysterious stranger had been made known by Mrs. Enfield to lady Roseville : but she had only slightly glanced at the information in her answer ; and for above two years she had ceased writing altogether, being on a tour of the continent with lord Roseville, her son and daughter.

Edward, as he approached his fourteenth year, began to meditate more seriously on his dependent situation, and would sometimes converse on the subject of his future destiny till he brought tears into the eyes of Mrs. Enfield and Eliza, till he wept him-

self. Still more frequently would he ramble for hours alone, and indulge his romantic imagination in conjectures concerning the story of his lost parents, or in building airy structures of his own futurity.

He was one day thus contemplatively strolling, when he found himself unawares at the brink of a precipice, which overhung a natural cascade, whose waters tumbling perpendicularly down the craggy sides of a steep cliff, formed at its base a little river, which divided the grounds of Roseville Park from those of Beauchamp Abbey.

Pleased with the spot, Edward threw himself listlessly on the grass, and, reclining his head upon his elbow, listened with a species of soothing, yet sad, delight to the monotonous dashings of the water-fall; while his eye surveyed the scene around him.

On each side of the eminence he saw a park and mansion; but in nothing were they similar to each other. On his right the ivy-mantled towers of Beauchamp Abbey bound-

ed the view of a thickly wooded domain, where huge oaks, the growth of centuries, waved over long dark terraces of grass, which the mower's sickle had not visited for years: grottos of shell-work, surmounted with ill-formed images of stone, now green with moss; hermitages with straw-thatched roofs; fountains which leaden cupids guarded; and caves dug deep in gloom, formed altogether a display of the taste of other times, and made up a scene, which, while it impressed the thought "that grandeur once dwelt here," at the same time told to the beholder the tale of its desertion. Nothing living was seen upon the surface of the earth, nor was the stillness of desolation interrupted, save by the discordant screams of the rooks who tenanted the lofty pines.

When the eye turned to the left, a scene so different presented itself, that no contrast could be stronger. Trees of all species, and of various growth, planted with exact attention to produce effect, seemed as they

were sprinkled in elegant clusters upon the close-cropt grass, which every where showed the hand of cultivating care. Pleasure-grounds, where flowers, shrubs, canals, statues, casinos, and pavilions, were mingled by the hand of taste so skilfully, that the scene of blended art and nature seemed like the workmanship of fairies. Amidst it rose the mansion of lord Roseville, combining, in a most masterly style of modern composition, all the magnificence of an eastern palace with all the elegance of an Italian villa. But life gave an action and an interest to this scene, which formed the most striking reverse of its neighbour.

In some parcels of the Park were seen scores of sturdy peasants, bending to gather from the golden spots the waving corn. In other parts flocks of sheep and herds of cattle grazed; and on a vast sheet of water proudly floated a superbly decorated yacht, while on the margin several men were throwing nets for fish.

Edward had remained a considerable time contemplating these scenes in silent solitude, when his attention was aroused by the sound of a human voice. He started; and at a considerable distance beneath him he perceived Adam Osborn, the old steward of sir Everard Beauchamp, who was slowly hobbling up the steep ascent, accompanied by a little shock-dog, to whom he occasionally addressed his discourse, not imagining that any other ear listened to his lamentations.

Adam was now in the eightieth year of his age, almost the whole of which term he had spent in the service of the Beauchamps. He had been admitted when an orphan of twelve years old among the domestics of the Abbey, and had remained more than three-score years an inmate of its antient walls,—witness of many changing scenes. Children had been born there since Adam first entered it, who had lived to old age, and had died, leaving him the surviving spectator of

their whole drama of seven ages. He had quaffed many a joyous draught at the births of the sons and daughters of that honourable house ; he had danced at the weddings of many ; he had followed still more to the tomb. He had seen the sun of prosperity pouring its splendid rays around the noble mansion of his masters, then thronged with summer friends ;—and he had lived to see that throng dispersed by the chill blasts of stern adversity, which long blew round the solitary domain, where he alone was left to contemplate, with aching breast, the daily ruin of the Beauchamp interest and influence, strikingly contrasted with the daily increase of the power and splendour of the earl of Roseville.

To Edward this venerable man had been pointed out by the cottagers, as he passed through the village, under the nick-name of Cross Old Adam ; but to Adam, Edward was wholly unknown.

The first intelligible sentence that struck the ears of Edward, was—

“An earl!—Good Lord! an earl!—the waiter’s son to come to be an earl! Well, thank God, they can’t unmake the father what he was—No, no—they cannot tell me that this new-fangled banker lord is not a waiter’s son. Ah, well-a-day! lack-a-day! But he has a power of gold! Ah! there it is. Well, never mind ’em, Shock, never mind ’em. They may tell us we are poor, but they cannot say that our noble baronet’s father cleaned shoes, and ran off errands barefoot. No, no, no! Let ’em look back from our good king’s reign, to William the Conqueror’s time, and see what brave and noble knights the race of Beauchamps are!”

Edward registered every word of old Adam in his memory. He was delighted with such a proof of his affectionate attachment to the fortunes of his masters, which made even his prejudices appear amiable.

From the position which Edward had taken, he could, unperceived by the old steward, command a perfect view of him. He had seated himself on a little hillock of earth, and the dog was looking up in his face.

“What kickshaw! What gingerbread-work the waiter’s son is making!” exclaimed Adam again. “Farming too! Fishmonger as well, I warrant. Selling and buying, digging and delving, as if there was no difference between tradesfolks and farmers, and gentry and nobility! Ah, lack-a-day! Shock, what will poor old England come to at last, with all this trafficking confusion! Well, they can’t say that we do these mean things! No, no.—The oldest man alive never saw a plough in Beauchamp Abbey Park! No, no.—The noble owners of that proud building never took in calves to grass. They knew the dignity proper for the station to which it pleased God to call them; they left farming to farmers, and grazing to

gráziers, and fishing to fishers, and so let all ranks live. They spent their noble fortunes like princes as they were, and spread happiness all around them. Oh, Shock, the days that I have seen! Ah! in those noble green alleys (pointing his walking-stick towards Beauchamp Abbey Park), and up and down those terraces and slopes, many a time I've seen dukes, duchesses, and lords, and bishops, aye archbishops also, (for we had one in our own family,) walking in rich and proper dresses, and in proper state; while tables all the whole length of that long walk have been set out with more than a thousand pieces of massy genuine plate, all solid gold and silver! I shall never see the like again; I fear me, Shock:—and yet, God is a good God,—and they do say that the young baronet must, after all, be very rich, considering his long minority. But those cursed foreign parts, I hate them ever since they turned out so fatal to my darling Alfred. Oh, what a princely master he would have

been! Well, I may be deceived; a few years more will show, though I mayn't live to see them; but I will hope,—yes, in God's mercy, I will hope to live to see the upstart waiter's son put out of countenance by a true and worthy descendant of the Beauchamps, and then I shall go to the grave in peace."

Edward lost no sentence of the old steward's soliloquy. Sensible how greatly he was indebted to the bounty of lord Roseville, his gratitude, which was of the highest order, at first impelled him to anger at the degrading epithets which he had heard coupled with his benefactor's name; but the age, simplicity, and faithful attachment of the accuser so completely won his affection, that, in his admiration of old Adam, he soon lost all remembrance that he belonged to the rival of his patron. His eyes were riveted upon his venerable form, and his ears caught even his sighs.

Adam now attempted to rise from his seat

of turf; but, leaning upon his stick for aid, that faithful companion of many a walk at this moment deserted him; it fell from his hand, and the old man was precipitated head forwards a very considerable way down the hill. Edward, shrieking involuntarily, darted in an instant to his aid; the dog barked and howled; but poor Adam lay extended, completely senseless to their demonstrations of concern.

Edward paused for a moment in an agony of doubt what measures to pursue; whether to run for aid, or stay by the senseless corpse. A groan, however, from the sufferer determined him; he ran to the river, and in his hat brought water, with which he chafed the old man's temples, and poured some into his mouth. He had soon the satisfaction to see him open his eyes, and shortly after to find that no bones were broken, and that no very material injury had been the consequence of the accident.

"What angel from heaven are you?" said Adam, gazing with astonishment upon Edward. "No soul was near me when I fell."

"Yes, sir, I was near you; I had been lying on the grass at the summit of the hill, some time before you ascended it; I saw you sit alone, and I saw you fall: I thank Heaven I did, since I have been of service to you."

"You have saved my life, and I must know to whom I owe it."

Here Adam, with the assistance of Edward, was once more upon his legs, but was scarcely able to stand, from the effect of pain, which, as he expressed it, he felt in all his bones.

Edward wished himself able to carry him home. "But pray, sir, lean heavier," said he; "I am stronger than I look to be, I assure you."

"I thank you—I thank you," said the grateful Adam, as he limped along.

leaning on Edward's shoulder and his own unfortunate stick, while Shock ran yelping before them:—"I can but thank you; I can't reward you: but God will, young gentleman; for it's a wonderful thing now-a-days to see youth give assistance to age. But I must know who you are."

"I live in the valley," said Edward, "at the white cottage."

"What,—you are the youth that dame Enfield brought up?" exclaimed Adam.

"Yes."

"Oh, then I don't wonder that you are so good-hearted. I have heard much of her; and if it had not been that she's connected with this upstart earl, I should have paid her a visit long ago."

"Why should that prevent it?" said Edward.

"Why!—Oh, that's a long story, young man."

Adam's pain increased with the continuance of their walk; and little more was said.

till they arrived at the entrance of Beauchamp Abbey, where they were received by Mrs. Newton, the housekeeper, a maiden lady, who was not much younger than the steward. The other inhabitants of the Abbey consisted of two servant maids, a gardener, and his son, a lad about fourteen.

Edward having seen his venerable charge safely seated in his old leather arm-chair, in an apartment called the steward's room, and partly recovered from the effects of the accident, would have taken his leave; but Adam, exerting his strength a little, exclaimed,

“Not so fast, not so fast, young sir. Pray sit down. We must be better acquainted now. But for this accident, indeed, any dependent of lord Roseville's would never have been asked to set his foot in Beauchamp Abbey: but, as it is, I cannot be satisfied with such a short sight of so much goodness, in so young a man: besides, how can you help the doings of this mushroom?”

Edward blushed at the knowledge that his story was so generally known, and felt indignant at the word 'mushroom' thus applied to his benefactor.

"I think, sir," said he with quickness, "it is better we take leave. I rejoice to have been useful to you; and I esteem you for your attachment to a family you have so long served. You seem acquainted with my obligations to lord Roseville, and that knowledge must convince you it will be as unpleasant to me to hear his lordship reviled on account of his origin, as it would be to you to hear the noble family of Beauchamp ridiculed because it is now less wealthy than it has been."

Mrs. Newton, the housekeeper, stood with her mouth wide open, her eyes fixed on Edward, and her arms folded before her at the bottom of a long stomacher, with mute astonishment.

"You are no common boy, be who you will," said Adam.

“Whatever I might have been,” said Edward, “I *am* the child of lord Roseville’s bounty. You are a determined enemy of him, whom I should be a monster if I did not love ; therefore, good bye, sir.”

“Stop a moment,” said Adam, “you are young and hasty : I will make allowances for your situation ; and if you will only believe me, I will never mention the name of that lord again in your hearing. There now, sit down ; and, Mrs. Newton, come make us a cup of tea.”

“Well, I must confess,” said Mrs. Newton, “Mr. Osborn, say what you will, that what the young gentleman says about the person who is now called lord Roseville is most wonderfully to the point, and shows that he has a prodigious fine genius, and a most amiable heart. It is a treat I have long, long been unused to, to hear such elegant language. I never recollect to have heard such sentiments since the decease of poor Mr. Lambert, whose elegies

in manuscript," turning to Edward, "sir, I shall have great pleasure in offering you the perusal of; for——"

"Hush! Mrs. Newton, hush!" said Adam: "When you get upon the subject of Mr. Lambert and his elegies, there's no getting you off again—Come, let us have some tea."

Edward had met Eliza in the village as he passed through with Adam, and was therefore under no apprehension of occasioning uneasiness on account of his absence. A natural wish to extend his very limited acquaintance, and a curiosity to see the interior of the Abbey, strongly operated in favour of his stay, and he sat down to partake of the repast prepared for him.

As soon as propriety permitted, Edward hinted his wish of surveying the spacious apartments of the Abbey; and Mrs. Newton, delighted at an opportunity of showing off her talents to such an elegant youth, as she termed Edward, determined instantly to

gratify him, in opposition to the advice of Adam, who, as he could not accompany them, in consequence of his fall, would willingly have kept Edward to converse with him.

With Dinah, her sturdy handmaid, as her attendant to open the windows and carry the duster, Mrs. Newton now accompanied her young visitor through the damp and dreary galleries of the Abbey.

As in their exterior appearance, so in their furniture and decorations, the Abbey and Roseville Park were perfect contrasts. In the mansion of the earl he had beheld with pleasure the witcheries of modern refinement, the combination of comfort and elegance, and the blended attractions of grandeur and grace; yet at the present moment he was equally alive to the impressions of awful delight which a contemplation of the majestic stateliness of the apartments and the regal magnificence of the furniture could not fail to create upon the

imagination of a youth of genius. Indeed, the latter produced much the more powerful and lasting effect.

He could not follow with his eye a long series of family portraits, and be told that this general was the son of that archbishop; that the prelate himself was the son of that ermined judge, the nephew of that cardinal, and grandson of that armed knight: he could not hear recounted the history of the tapestry-rooms, where the adventures of some of the earliest ancestors of the Beauchamps were wrought into action by the fair fingers of their ladies; nor listen to the stories of tradition, which explained the various symbols of their armorial badges; nor view the antique weapons with which they fought, nor the tattered banners which they had purchased with their blood:—Edward could not see and hear these things without imbibing something like the spirit of those times, to which they seemed, as it were, to

carry back his own. He felt sensations amounting almost to devotion and enthusiasm for a family of such antiquity, and suffered his warm imagination to place him in the situation of a descendant of these illustrious ancestors, till his heart beat with emulation of their proud achievements.

The bursts of noble feeling, the sentiments of veneration which escaped his artless lips, charmed the old housekeeper beyond the power of her expression; and when the shadows of approaching night compelled them to return to the steward's room, without having seen one third of the Abbey, the same sentiments repeated, and the regret which he expressed at leaving the noble mansion, caused old Adam to forget his accident; and, starting up in admiration of such a youth, he pressed him with ecstasy to his bosom, and blessed him; concluding his speech with—

“O that it had pleased God the noble

Alfred had lived, and that into his hands you had fallen, instead of such a——!" mushroom he would have said, but he recollected himself and paused.

Edward embraced him affectionately, and, with promises of a renewed visit the next day, returned home to astonish Mrs. Enfield and Eliza with the store of romantic ideas and sentiments which this accidental visit to the Abbey had inspired. The first words he spoke on entering the cottage were—

"Oh! why was not I born in these days?"

"What days?" said Eliza.

"Those antient times, when such deeds were done as are recorded in the tapestry-rooms at Beauchamp Abbey. What a noble fellow was the first Richard Beauchamp, commonly called the Generous!"

"Pray, what mighty deeds did he?" inquired Eliza, smiling at his energy.

"He conquered three hostile barons, who at the same time besieged his castle, which in those days stood near the spot where, in

fourteen hundred and forty, the foundation of the present Abbey was laid. These cowardly varlets led their vassals, at midnight, against the castle of baron Beauchamp, and, on a preconcerted signal, attacked it in three different points at the same instant. Richard repelled them all with slaughter, and took two of the barons prisoners. Oh! if you were to see the noble Richard, as he is exhibited in different parts of the storied tapestry, the blood would mount into your cheeks as it did into mine. In one place he is seen charging the assailants at the head of his brave followers, who are rushing from a sally-port;—in another, wresting the broken javelin from the treacherous baron John, and seizing him with his own hand a prisoner. Then again, after the victory,—behold him, full of majesty, in the bannered hall, publicly haranguing the two captive barons upon the baseness of their treachery (for they broke a truce), and then generously restoring them their liberty. Oh, what a glorious scene! The warriors' plumed helmets

raised in the air; the ladies waving their embroidered scarfs; the pages running to and fro with massy goblets filled with wine; the minstrels striking chords of victory; while all the time the gallant Richard Beauchamp stands with a modest air, as if unconscious of the homage paid him. O that I had lived in times like those! for then I could have won myself a name, in spite of evil Destiny; had she then done what she now has—robbed me of my father's——”

“Why, Edward!” said Mrs. Enfield, half alarmed, and completely astonished at the enthusiasm which his manner no less than his words displayed: “My dear boy, this visit to the old Abbey has turned your brain!”

“No;” replied the boy with ardour; “it has only warmed my heart. Tomorrow you shall both go with me; and if you do not feel as I feel, it will not be because you are not mad, but because you are not men.”

The impression wrought upon the mind of the old steward by the visit of Edward to the Abbey was highly favourable to the latter. Adam longed to behold again the wonderful boy, as he styled him, with scarcely less ardour than Edward panted for a further knowledge of the interior of the old building, and a more intimate acquaintance with its venerable domestic.

Early the following day he repaired to Beauchamp Abbey, and was received with joy. Adam, completely recovered from the effects of his fall, now accompanied him from one end of the old pile to the other, intermixing his descriptions of the place with various anecdotes of its former masters.

All that he heard, all that he saw, increased the desire of Edward to hear and see still more. The gossiping garrulity of old age itself was taciturnity and reserve, compared with the eager inquiries of this young and ardent auditor.

The whole of that day and the next he

devoted to this new species of enjoyment which accident had afforded him. With Mrs. Newton, the housekeeper, he was no less a favourite than with Adam. He recited to her the manuscript poetry of which she had spoken in her first interview, and evinced such taste and feeling in the recital, as would have won the admiration of judges far more competent than Mrs. Newton. Her idolatry was, however, confirmed by this talent of her young idol, and she joined with Adam in his adoration of such a phenomenon.

From one or other of these ancient oracles of the family, Edward, in a very few weeks, gleaned a large portion of the biography of the Beauchamps.

A new acquaintance and a new course of studies were, however, about this time introduced to him. The long absence of lady Roseville abroad had not in the least degree lessened the anxious care she felt for the future welfare of her charge.

It happened that a worthy clergyman, advanced in life, was strongly recommended to her patronage, having passed through a series of disappointments. Combining her bounty to Mr. North with her just views of Edward's improvement, she procured for the former a curacy near Roseville Park, and assigned to him a suite of apartments in that mansion, with a liberal salary, on condition that he would undertake to instruct Edward in such branches of education as his situation had hitherto precluded him from obtaining; as lord Roseville had, from year to year, postponed removing him from Mrs. Enfield's; and at length had determined that he should remain there till his own return to England.

The arrival of this clergyman occasioned some interruption of Edward's constant visits to the Abbey; and Ovid and Virgil rivalled, for a time, the influence of old Adam Osborn and the Abbey antiquities over his youthful mind.

Mr. North, though a sound divine and an

excellent scholar, was neither a bigot nor a pedant. The principles of truth which he inculcated, and the lessons of literature which he delivered, were congenial alike to the feelings and the taste of his pupil, and he had the satisfaction of beholding him make a progress in knowledge which reflected honour on both.

Several years were thus spent with mutual satisfaction by master and pupil; during which time Edward acquired considerable knowledge of the Latin and Greek classics, and went through a course of English reading, judiciously selected and most usefully commented upon by Mr. North.

Various causes still detained the Roseville family abroad. Their foreign excursion was productive of very important, though undesigned, advantages to Edward. The earl of Roseville, during his residence at Milan, accidentally met, at the hotel of a nobleman, a celebrated Italian painter, of the name of Palmoretti, who had just

finished some admirable works at the villa of this nobleman, and who was then upon the eve of his departure for France, with a young French pupil, named Dubois. The ostentation of the wealthy Englishman prompted him to offer a very large sum to Palmoretti to paint the banqueting-room at Roseville. The artist readily acceded to the overtures of the earl, and accordingly arrived in Cumberland with Dubois, his pupil. They took up their residence at Roseville Park, where it was calculated the intended works would detain them at least three or four years.

As Mr. North was an inhabitant of the same mansion, and as Edward was almost a daily visitant there, an intimacy naturally ensued between them and the foreigners, whose manners were highly fascinating. The philosophical irreligion of the Italian, and the libertine principles of the Frenchman, might indeed have proved pernicious to the young mind of Edward, had not the

example, no less than the precepts, of his excellent tutor preserved it from contagion. Under his inspection, on the contrary, the advantages which he derived from the society of these foreigners proved very important to the formation of his character, as they were the means of his acquiring accomplishments which, in so sequestered a state of life, it was almost maraculous that he should obtain.

Palmoretti was not merely an admirable painter; he excelled many professors of music in his knowledge of that science, and even in Italy was admired for his performances on various instruments. With the genuine enthusiasm of a zealot, he experienced unbounded pleasure in making proselytes to his studies, and in the young Montagu, as he styled Edward, he found a pupil whose capacity and perseverance surpassed his most sanguine wishes. He in consequence grew extremely fond of him, and scarcely ever

suffered him to be without either an easel or a violoncello.

Dubois, on the other hand, with the gaiety of a Frenchman, aimed to laugh him out of his rustic gait and studious lounge; jeered him upon his clownish air, and insisted upon teaching him to fence and to dance. In this manner Edward most pleasantly acquired the accomplishments of music, fencing, and dancing, and obtained no inconsiderable knowledge of the Italian and French languages. It was thus his good fortune to combine the advantages of innocence and health, which a retired country education yields, with the acquirements which are, in general, only to be obtained by risking the young mind in the lottery of a public school, and enervating the youthful faculties in the hot-bed of a luxurious metropolis.

Thus dividing his time between grave and lighter studies, in visiting alternately his ve-

nerable friend at the Abbey, and his gay acquaintances at Roseville Park, Edward's years rolled on, and he gradually overcame, in a great degree, the effects produced on his mind by the mysterious stranger.

CHAPTER VII.

A WOODMAN.

WHEN Edward had attained his one-and-twentieth year no farther change had taken place, nor had any incident worthy of notice occurred either at Roseville Park or Beauchamp Abbey. The earl and his family still continued abroad, and Adam Osborn still remained the unmolested governor of the Abbey.

Regular remittances arrived, with very kind letters, from lady Roseville to her protégé; but no plan for his future life had yet been even hinted at.

At this period Edward was in outward form the man; his mind was well informed, and his heart was uncorrupted. His person, which was above the middle stature, was gracefully noble, his complexion was fair and ruddy, and the well harmonized fea-

tures of his face, the placid smile that adorned his lips, and the sparkling fires that beamed from his eyes, indicated, in the most striking characters, the suavity, the benevolence, and the intelligence of his spirit.

Sometimes, indeed, a transient shade of sadness rested on his brow, when the recollection of the uncertainty of his birth and the inactive dependency of his present situation obtruded upon his mind; but these were specks of clouds which, in that sanguine season of man's life, the slenderest rays of hope would instantly dispel.

Sometimes, with a heart-drawn sigh, he would exclaim, in solitude—

“For what purpose was I rescued from the deep?—To eat the bread of idleness thus day after day; to feed on the precarious bounty of a man whose face I never saw, and whose future intentions respecting me are unknown? Would to Heaven I had been born the acknowledged son of the lowliest peasant,

rather than be that undefined shadow that I am ! No flattering hopes would then have lulled me into idle dreams of splendid origin ; no vain bounty would then have held my hands from labour, or palsied the exertion of my faculties ! O that I were even a shepherd's son ! To demonstrate filial love, to merit and obtain parental blessings, would prove exhaustless sources of delight : the very toil that wearied me to sleep would be crowned with sweetest peace ; and I should hail each morning's sun with tranquil bosom and a grateful heart !——But I !——Is not a slave's a happier lot than mine ? He knows the worst that Fate can inflict on him ; knows that he can fall no lower in the scale of human beings !——while I am slave alternately and equally to despair and hope !——They struggle for possession of my mind ; and if the paradise of hope be mine one hour, the cavern of despair imprisons me the next !”

Sometimes, indeed, this discontent expressed itself in pettish remarks, to Mrs.

Enfield, upon the long absence of his patrons abroad, and upon the uncertain prospects of his future destination.

“Edward! dear Edward!” observed that excellent woman, in reply to some such effusions as the above, “This is disease of mind. Have you thus early, and ere yet the fascinations or the cares of life are known to you—so soon have you forgotten the sacred precepts of religion, that for the humble gratitude which once attuned your lips to praise your bosom has no longer room? For what rude tempests of swelling hopes and fretful fears have you exchanged the resignation of a Christian! If I speak warmly, Edward, oh! let a mother’s interest in your welfare justify my zeal! For more than eighteen years I have marked attentively the progress of your mind: I know your heart—’tis noble, Edward; and of all the meaner vices, I think, I may defy the power. Yet, believe me, equally fatal to happiness are the errors which result from pride of heart, as

those less splendid ones which are the offspring of a little mind. The subjection of the will to reason and to piety is absolutely necessary to the possession of tranquillity. Is not that heavenly guest, think you, as much a stranger to the bosom of the crowned plunderer of nations, as to that of the meanest pilferer? and who would barter a peace that passeth all understanding for the homage of a world?"

The influence of admonition such as this was infinitely valuable to a mind aspiring as was Edward's. There was no hazard, as Mrs. Enfield justly perceived, that the trammels of dependance would become habitually easy, or the food of charity agreeable, to a youth of his lofty sentiments and his generous feelings. The danger to be apprehended was the reverse of too much humility; the rebellious restlessness of a spirit soaring beyond those limits which Providence had assigned for the sphere of its duties.

Thus, on one hand, were the effects of a

humiliating destiny counteracted by the native greatness of his soul; while, on the other, the lessons of wisdom, and the examples of piety, afforded by Mrs. Enfield and Mr. North, converted that very humiliation into a salutary counterpoise to his natural ambition.

Such was Edward when he encountered the following adventure:—He had been out the whole of an autumnal day, shooting, in company with Dubois and lord Roseville's game-keeper, when, towards evening, they began to recollect how far they had wandered from home in pursuit of their sport.

“Now, then, for the shortest road home,” said Dubois.

“To the right, then, as soon as we clear this wood,” said Edward.

“You mistake, I think,” said Dubois: “surely the left must be our road; but it is very material to be certain, for if we turn wrong we shall be benighted.”

“Yonder,” said Edward, “is a wood-

man's cottage; I'll run and endeavour to gain correct information. Walk on gently, and I'll overtake you before you reach the road."

Away ran Edward. With the object to which he was running in view, he entirely forgot that he was crossing and recrossing a variety of paths until he reached it; then, having failed in obtaining the information he sought, as none of the inhabitants were at home, he was about to run back to his companions; and then, with perplexity, he saw his error. He stood still for a moment to recollect himself: his eye wandered from path to path, but they were so thickly covered with trees, and so uniformly choked up with underwood, that they all presented precisely the same chance of success. He thought he had run in nearly a straight line to this cottage, and therefore made a brisk effort to rejoin his party, by running, as he thought, the same way back.

Having pursued this plan for a consider-

able space of time, he had the mortification to find himself suddenly at the edge of a deep morass, on the other side of which was an extensive glade. Thus convinced that he had taken a wrong road, he halted, and pondered upon his situation. It began to grow dark; no light was to be expected from the moon; and, unless he should by accident discover a road out of the wood, there was no other alternative than that of wandering about all night, or seeking some natural shelter, which in that situation was not easily to be found. He now hollaed as loudly as he was able; but no answer was returned. He fired off his fowling-piece, in the hope that one of his friends would reply by a similar signal. Nothing was heard, however, in answer to his firing or his repeated calling. He climbed a high tree—nothing was discernible from the topmost branch: a misty vapour, rising from the earth, gave to the wood beneath the appearance of a vast lake, and Edward

now began to despair of extricating himself from his very unpleasant situation. Thoughts of home, and of those who there anxiously awaited his return, now obtruded themselves, and created the far greater part of his uneasiness: for his personal safety he had not the shadow of a fear.

In this state of mind he wandered about the wood during the space of three hours, by which time it was totally dark, and a chilling rain began to fall thick around him. Fatigued with the toilsome sports of the day, and harassed by vexation, Edward would have gladly reposed upon the earth; but sensible of the imprudence of such a measure, he continued walking a mazy round, and determined to do so as long as he could keep himself awake.

He was, at length, almost compelled to yield to the overpowering effects of fatigue, when, on a sudden, he heard the distant barking of a dog. Electrified by this spark of hope, he aroused himself once more, and

walked as fast as the darkness permitted him towards the spot from whence the sound came. Fortunately the dog continued to bark, and by the more distinct hearing of the sound, Edward rightly imagined he approached nearer to the animal, whose tongue was now his pilot. He had presently the additional satisfaction of discerning, though still at a distance, a glimmering light, which appeared to be in motion. In about ten minutes more, however, he had arrived sufficiently near the object of his hopes to hear and see distinctly. To his astonishment he perceived that the light issued from the windows of the little cottage which had so unfortunately been the cause of his separation from his companions. The flames which had attracted Edward rose from a blazing wood fire, which shone through the casement. The dog still barked; but the party within appeared to pay no attention to it. Edward now joyfully advanced towards the cottage, and through the win-

dow discerned a sturdy woodman, the lord of this little tenement, seated by the fire, with his pipe in his mouth, and his brown mug of ale before him ;—a delightful picture of a happy peasant in a land of freedom.

Over his chimney hung his gloves, his hat, his bill hook, and his axe. Before him, fallen asleep from fatigue, sat his wife, and at her feet was a little brown maiden, about ten years old, who was also asleep, reclining her head on the lap of her mother.

Though the first impulse of Edward was to tap at the window and demand shelter, yet so powerful was the impression which the picture before him created, that he paused for a minute to contemplate it.—He then gently tapped against the casement ; and in an instant the little groupe were in alarm. He was, however, admitted most cheerfully, welcomed to the fire-side most heartily, and the best entertainment the means of this noble-hearted host afforded was voluntarily offered. for the night, it be-

ing absolutely impossible to return to his friends till morning.

“ But I’ll tell you,” said the woodman, “ we have no bed to spare:—there is one over head here, to be sure ; but there’s a queer sort of body now asleep in it, who would not let you share it, I dare say, if you was his own son. Hows’ever here ’s a good warm room for you ; we’ll clap another faggot on the hearth——Peggy will let you have one of our blankets ; and that ’s better than sleeping in the wood this weather !”

“ What is all that noise about, Goodman Ruddick ?” exclaimed a voice above stairs.

“ Nothing ;—nothing at all, master Thomson,” replied the woodman, making signs to them all to be silent.

“ Nay, I heard the wicket opened.”

“ I have been letting Lion loose, that ’s all ;—do get to sleep, man, do.”

The few words that passed afterwards between Ruddick and Edward were whispered : as the woodman said that Goodman Thom-

son was a good lodger, and paid them main well ; but was so particular shy, that if he thought any other creature besides themselves were in the house, he would run away from it, even at that time of night.

“ So,” added the woodman, “ you must be off as soon as I call you in the morning ; for Thomson will be down by day-break, and if he sees you he’ll not stay another night with us ; and that would be a huge loss to us, I assure you.”

Edward promised compliance, glad to obtain shelter on any conditions.

Early in the morning, while it was yet dark, the woodman roused his guest. Edward started instantly from his humble couch, and having rewarded the kind peasant for his hospitality, they set out together, by the light of a lantern, to the spot in the wood which Ruddick was then engaged in clearing, as it would have been vain for Edward to have attempted to explore his way before day-light.

By the time they reached the scene of the woodman's labour it was dawn of day. The morning air was fresh and invigorating, and Edward, recovered from his fatigue, felt the glow of youthful vigour in his cheek, and was delighted to hear the cheerful notes of the woodman's song, while each lusty stroke of his arm was answered by the echo of the woods.

In contemplating the freedom and content of this hardy son of labour, Edward insensibly fell into a comparison of his own inactive life and dependent state with that of honest Ruddick,—a comparison which led him into a reverie by no means pleasing,—until, starting from the position in which he was leaning against a tree, he exclaimed—

“I forget the uneasiness of my friends: it is now quite light; pray direct me the nearest way to Roseville Park.”

“To Roseville Park!” cried the woodman, throwing down his axe, and fixing his

eyes upon Edward, who was dressed in a green cloth shooting-jacket and pantaloons, with his fowling-piece slung at his back; "Why, you ben't game-keeper to that chap, be you? if you be, its well enough old Thomson did not see you; for he hates every thing about that new-fashioned lord as he hates the devil;—and surely, as mischief will have it, yonder he is!—If you be, for God's sake don't own it if he axes you. There he be coming, with my Bet, to bring breakfast."

Edward, turning round, beheld at a distance a man dressed much in the same style as the woodman, with a belt round his loins and a billhook in his hand, and by his side trotted the little girl he had seen the night before, dressed in a red cloak, and carrying a pitcher.

"Who is this Mr. Thomson?" said Edward.

"Aye, friend, if you can tell that," said

the woodman, with a cunning shake of the head, "its more than any body knows in these parts."

"He appears to be a wood-cutter like yourself."

"He makes believe to work a little now and then, when he's well enough; but, lord, he don't want for money! Sometimes, too, he's away for weeks and weeks together;—but don't drop a hint that you lay in my house last night. Good-bye to you; walk past him, and take no notice."

Edward fully intended to do as the woodman directed; but as he drew nearer to the man whose notice he was determined to avoid, he found it impossible; for he perceived instantly, even under so extraordinary a disguise, the well-remembered features of the very stranger whom he had seen at the cottage of Mrs. Enfield so many years ago. Edward involuntarily stopped: the little girl dropped a curtesy, and the stranger bowed.

"That be the gentleman that gave mother money," said the artless little girl, whom the woodman had forgotten to caution.

"Money! for what did he give your mother money?" exclaimed the stranger.

Edward now deemed it proper to interfere.

"For a night's lodging, sir," said he.

"A spy! by Heavens, a spy!" cried the stranger: then, to the girl, "Go, go to your father, child."

"Your suspicion wrongs me, sir," said Edward. "Chance, or, I should rather say, protecting Providence, directed me last night to yonder cottage, or I must have perished in this wood!"

"Why, then, was I told a falsehood, when I inquired the cause of last night's interruption of my sleep?"

"Because the humanity of your landlord would not suffer him to shut his door against a fellow-creature in distress; and because his necessities made him seem to comply with your injunctions to the contrary."

“Is this his sophistry or yours, sir, may I ask?”

“Sir, I have declared the truth:—I had been shooting the whole of yesterday with some friends: as night drew on, we found ourselves so far from Roseville Park—”

“From where?—yet, hold! repeat it not again!—the hated sound tortures my brain! And yet, can it be!—yes!—your features!—am I right!—speak!—tell me!—did I not see you once at—at——”

“Your conjectures, sir, are right: I am the object of lord Roseville’s bounty; your face and form, even in this disguise, I recognised the moment I beheld you; and all the painful feelings of my heart are now returning at the recollection of your strange discourse.”

“Oh, wondrous! wondrous! if this be chance!—But, is it—can it be so? Tell me, youth, who sent you hither?—how did you discover a retreat hidden in the recesses of such a wood?—how did you find me?”

"Indeed, indeed, I did not seek you, sir ; and even had I motives so to do, how was I to find a clue to one of whom I had never heard the slightest tidings since that hour?"

While Edward spoke, the stranger gazed upon him with intense attention, his countenance gradually relaxing from austere to tender.

"Indeed, sir," repeated Edward, "this our second interview is as much the effect of chance as was our first."

"Neither is the effect of chance!" exclaimed the stranger with energy ; "Both have been decreed by an overruling Providence!—Oh, poor boy!—Poor injured child! The voice of Heaven, in these almost miraculous encounters, chides me for my injustice ; and I will not, cannot longer conceal from you the interest that I ought to take in—— in all that concerns you !"

As he spoke, a most powerful conflict of the feelings was visible in his face and man-

ner; while Edward's blood almost congealed within him as the important words struck on his ear.

"You fill me with astonishment!" said he at length. "An interest in my concerns! in me!—O God! and do I really see again one who knows my destiny;—am I not indeed anonymous to all the world! O sir, if you indeed know aught of the dear beings to whom I owe a child's affections, reveal,—reveal the interesting truth! Why are you silent? Why do you avoid that question?—You weep.—'Tis then as you said;—my parents are no more. Yet still, if you indeed can tell me, say who were my parents, that I may at least reverence their memory and bear their name? Poor as I am, I never will disgrace it."

"Noble, noble creature!" said the stranger, "Why have I shunned you? What contamination could I fear from such a soul!"

"Shun me!" cried Edward; "O Hea-

vents ! what horror is there in my destiny that can have driven from me the only being from whom I can ever hope to learn it ? Oh, sir, if you are not senseless to the feelings of human nature, judge what I must suffer in this moment of suspense, and shorten its keen, its killing agonies !”

“ I know, thoroughly well I know the anguish of your heart ; and Heaven is my witness, how much I wish to spare your feelings these wounds which Fate in my despite inflicts. But since it is ordained that we should meet, ’twere still more cruel to withhold than to reveal all that the peculiarity of the circumstances allows me with prudence to unfold of the sad destiny of your father !”

“ Was he unhappy then ?” said Edward tenderly.

“ Oh ! his life is a scene of woes. When, ten years ago, I saw you at the cottage, I wronged the memory of your mother. Circumstances, which I have only recently dis-

covered, have confirmed her innocence beyond all power of doubt to shake."

"Do I not then behold my father?" cried Edward, kneeling, and clasping his hands together in an agony of suspense.

"Can he be called thy father, who was the murderer of thy mother!"

Edward started; his blood was chilled with horror.

"I see the agony of your mind. Oh! Wherefore have you sought this discovery? 'Tis true, I am—I am your father! And no less true it is, that my accursed groundless jealousy compelled your mother and her friend to flight, with thee, a suckling infant, in her arms. They were delivered by the hand of fate to death; when you were rescued to become the punishment, the torture of your guilty father."

"Oh, no, no, no! Recall those horrid words. No! though I will mourn for ever the dreadful loss of her who was my mother, how can I so well administer to the

peace of her adored spirit, as by affording every consolation of love and duty to my unhappy father? Oh, let me—let me clasp those knees; let me for ever entwine my arms around them, and never from this hour be separated from the presence of my father!”

The stranger wept.

“Oh, do not kill me with this cruel silence. I am young; and perhaps you deem me not sufficiently discreet to be intrusted with all your secret. Be it so:—yet take me to your bosom; convince me only that you are my father! Confirm, I beg, by some one fact, the voice of nature, and the hand of destiny which thus impel me to your bosom.”

“My son!—my son!” exclaimed the stranger, clasping the weeping Edward in his arms. “The time perhaps may come, when evidence, even to demonstration, shall convince the world that I am your father. But till discretion sounds, ‘the hour is

now arrived,' I ask your heart on grounds of faith alone!—What answer does it make, my child?"

"Oh, sir, whatever be the motives of your mysterious concealment, I bow to your discretion. Whether it be that my vacant heart, having no object on which to bestow the warm affections nature has engendered there, is eagerly desirous to embrace the shadow of an idol, and is therefore too credulous, I know not. However it be, it feels emotions now it never knew before; it beats with new-born ardour; it pants to do you service, and to gain your love, and it fears to lose your favour; it bounds with painful expectation to learn more than it already knows; yet dreads the possibility that further light may change the glimmerings of hope into a blaze of dreadful disappointment!"

"Whatever else of disappointment may await you, of this be certain,—that you have folded to your heart the author of your

being. Your father now embraces his only child!—All beyond this truth must yet be mystery. Whether the clouds that now obscure our fate will ever pass away, I myself cannot yet conjecture. Much, nay, all depends upon the events of the approaching winter!”

“So near as that! Is the issue of our fates so near, my father!”

“Your temperament, I see, is ardent. But what, my son, if in that issue, which you rejoice to see so near, your father’s life become the sacrifice of his foe’s revenge!”

“Almighty God forbid it! Oh, surely the Omnipotent, who shelters innocence and virtue from the shafts of evil, will protect my father!”

“You argue then that he who is thy father must be innocent, be virtuous. O Nature! who shall call thy unsophisticated dictates errors of the heart?”

“What means my father?”

“Nothing,—nothing, child: let that pass:

—And if I have uttered sentences that excite your wonder—nay, your suspicion even—do not admit them to your breast as proofs of innocence or guilt. You are too young to gather testimony from such unconnected echoes of the thoughts.”

“I will be careful, sir. My only aim shall be how I may best evince obedience to your will.”

“One proof of your sincerity I must exact.”

“Oh, name it!” cried Edward, with quickness, “that I may instantly comply with it, be it what it may. For you, sir, I am sure, can exact no compliance incompatible with honour!”

“’Tis **SECRECY!**—We are here alone: none of human kind are privy to our converse. But the Omniscient, the Omnipresent Being, whose altar is all space, he listens to the vow which I exact; he views the heart, sincere or hypocritical, of which I claim obedience! Are you then prepared to swear before that

Being that you will never, without my previous consent, divulge to any human creature aught that I may from time to time communicate to you : nay more, that you will not even to your dearest friend whisper a hint of this our interview ; but that in your future conduct and demeanour you will endeavour so to bear yourself, that the companions of your most confidential moments shall have no cause to harbour a surmise of this encounter."

"Implicitly I bow to your directions," said Edward ; "and solemnly invoke the heavenly registers of man's thoughts and words to record my voluntary oath of inviolable secrecy."

"Enough!" replied his father. "Now then return to the cottage of the good Mrs. Enfield. Still answer to the name you bear, and conform yourself to all the duties of that station in which you have been reared. Though I have purposely forbore to see you, yet I know every incident that has

taken place in which you have been interested;—I am acquainted with the progress of your education; I have attended to the developement of your character, and I have felt the most perfect satisfaction at the result of my inquiries. Should you be ordained to fill no higher rank than that in which your ostentatious patron may choose to place you, the accomplishments you possess, and the virtuous precepts you have imbibed, will prove at least amusements and consolations in any sphere of life:—and should the most sanguine of my hopes be realised, I shall have no cause to blush for my son, whose character I have every reason to believe will not shrink from a comparison with the noblest of his ancestors! Start not at that word; nor erect on the adventitious structure of a noble birth any principles of your future actions.”

“Noble birth! noble birth! noble birth!” thrice whispered youthful pride to the swelling heart of Edward. The sod on which

he stood appeared to rise beneath his feet ; a slight dizziness seized him, as he threw back his head, and his chest became visibly expanded. Almost the same instant he recollected his situation ; deep blushes suffused his cheeks, he held down his head and sighed.

“Blessed season of man’s life !” continued the father, who had attentively watched his son ; “pure days of youth, when the spirit of unsophisticated nature speaks in every look, and is visible in every emotion ! O my son ! dear image of the most injured of her sex ! you cannot know how much more painful is this concealment to my own heart than to you. I see the rising curiosity, the anxious suspense of your bosom ; yet I dare not, even to my own child reveal myself. Already I fear that I have said too much : let us now embrace and part. If possible, you shall see me soon again ; at all events you shall hear from me : but such is the peculiar cruelty of my fate, that at pre-

sent I can disclose no more! And remember, I charge you, remember my injunction. A premature discovery would be attended with no less a sacrifice than the life of your father!"

Edward had a thousand things ready on his tongue to reply to this speech of his father; but the sound of approaching voices at that instant caused the old gentleman to start with evident terror; and, slouching his hat over his face, he motioned Edward with his hand to depart, and turned instantly away. The agonized Edward attempted to follow; but his father turning round with a look of anger, that spoke daggers to his heart, exclaimed in a half whisper—

"Have you found a father only to destroy him? Away—or I perish!"

In a minute they were each out of sight of the other.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MALE RATTLE.

THE joy of Edward's friends at his return blinded them at the moment to the alteration which had taken place in his expressive countenance. The contention of hope and fear, the struggle of discontent against the checks of prudence, the swell of pride, which the reason of a youth of twenty-one could not completely conquer, and the burning thirst of interested curiosity, were all depicted in his face ; and would at any other time have excited the inquiries of the most superficial observer. Fortunately the anxiety occasioned by his absence, succeeded by the joy at his re-appearance, shielded him from those inquiries which his ingenuous breast would have been extremely pained to evade.

Scarcely had he related the cause of his absence, when, still further to relieve his embarrassment, a lad arrived at the cottage, to request that he would favour Mr. Osborn with his immediate presence at the Abbey.

“Has any thing particular happened?” said Edward.

“Oh dear, yes, sir,” said the lad. “Saving your presence, there be the devil to pay at the Abbey. There be a sort of gentleman captain comed down, with an auctioneerer; and they be hauling all the things about, to take a catecluse, as they call it, of the goods in the Abbey; and so now Mr. Osborn cries and takes on sadly; and poor Mrs. Newton is fainting and scolding the captain’s sarvants, who are quite fine gentlefolks; and only laugh at her, sir.”

The double impulse of escaping from the penetration of Mrs. Enfield and her daughter, Mr. North, Dubois, and Palmoretti, who were all assembled at the cottage; and of rendering assistance to his aged friend, now

stimulated Edward; and ere the boy concluded his rustic speech, he snatched up his hat, and, waving his hand to the company, ran with the swiftness of a bounding roe towards the Abbey.

Seated on a bench, under an old elm-tree, in a grove that formed an avenue to the Abbey Gate, old Adam awaited the arrival of his youthful counsellor. As Edward approached the spot, the old man rose to meet him, and throwing his aged arms around his neck, he reclined his hoary head on his breast, and wept bitterly.

No words passed between them. But as Edward assisted the old man to regain his seat, he placed in his hands a letter from the old and faithful agent of the Beauchamp concerns in London.

Letter.

“ Worthy sir,

“ It is my painful duty to announce to you
“ that after a servitude of more than four-
“ score years, you are discharged from your

situation. Worse than the worst we dreaded has come to pass. Sir Everard arrived in London three days ago, accompanied by his mother, the dowager, and her uncle. She is the most artful, and, I fear, at the same time the most wicked woman I ever knew. She governs her son so entirely, that he seems the mere instrument of her will. I can say no more: you will learn the rest too soon. Poor Beauchamp Abbey is to be stripped; the pictures, plate, and furniture, are to be brought to London, to be sold by public auction; the Abbey itself is to be consigned to the depredations of time, or perhaps let out as a stable for the horses of your neighbour at Roseville. I have surrendered up to the solicitor of sir Everard all our accounts, and now wash my hands of all his concerns. Oh, what a different complexion would the affairs of this antient family have worn at this hour, had it pleased Heaven to have spared us a sir Alfred!—But 'tis our duty to submit. You and I, worthy

sir, have but a little hour or two more to lament the disorders of the present state: yet, neither you nor I, I am sure, can refrain from a tear at seeing what now we see, seeing what we have seen!

“ Believe me to be, worthy sir,

“ Your sincere friend,

“ ANTHONY POTTS.”

“ Well may you weep, venerable good old man!” said Edward, as he mournfully folded up the letter, and delivered it back to Adam, whose silvery beard was wet with tears. “ But you were ever apprehensive of the worst, dear sir; do not then let the stroke fall too heavily, which has not taken you by surprise.”

“ Ah, well-a-day!” sighed old Adam; “ I did, to be sure, I did fear the fatal effects of his being brought up in foreign parts. I thought he would come to old England with outlandish notions unknown to his noble predecessors; but I did not

once dream that he would bring home his Italian mother. But I forget,—I forget ; I sent for you here, my dearest Mr. Edward, I sent for you here to speak to you alone ; for that puppy, that captain Neville, has brought down a mob of people with him, who are at this moment turning every thing upside down in the Abbey.”

Here old Adam paused, and Edward in vain attempted to moderate the excess of his indignation and grief. His anger, his regret, his contempt, and his vexation, were extreme, and for a time prevented his entering upon the business of his interview. When at length he was sufficiently calm for that purpose, Edward underwent a most affecting trial of his sensibility. The old man put into his hands a packet sealed, which, he told him, contained a will, by which all the property he possessed, amounting to three or four thousand pounds, was at his death bequeathed to Edward.

“ I have reserved it till I was convinced,”

said the old man, " what was the character of sir Everard. For, had he possessed the spirit of his ancestors, had he gloriously resolved to restore the splendours of the antient seat of his family, he would have needed every guinea, and he should have had them all. Oh, many a little whim and fancy, aye, some comforts too, have I denied myself to add one guinea more to my long hoarded stock; hoping that, however little, I was still somewhat aiding and assisting in recovering the glories of that name and family from whose noble bounty I received my first penny. But as it is, I might as well give sand to the preservation of a whirlwind, as money for such a purpose,—to this tool of his Italian mother,—who, as you perceive, no more values the reputation of his ancestors, than if they had been shoe-blacks or waiters! Take, therefore, you this free gift, my noble youth, and you will find that I have only troubled you in return with one request:—namely, that you will see these

bones laid in the earth as near as possibly can be granted to that vault under the altar in the chapel, where my honoured masters and their ladies, and their children rest."

Edward was spared the pain of reply, and prevented from returning the packet, as he was prompted to do, by the appearance of Mrs. Newton, dressed in her calash and tippet, followed by a maid-servant carrying a trunk.

"Don't go in ! don't go in, Mr. Osborn, they'll be the death of you ! Such graceless wretches these eyes never saw before. The captain has given the fellows leave to break open the cellar, as you were not in the way ; and they have made beasts of themselves ; and the auctioneer and the captain are not much better. Oh, Mr. Montagu," continued the old lady, "that ever I should live to see this day ! They're ransacking every hole and corner, to take an inventory, as they pretend ; but such coarse jokes upon our poor dear dead mistresses and masters,

Mr. Montagu, as would make your blood boil !”

“ Madam !” Edward exclaimed, “ it *does* make my blood mount into my brain to hear of insults which it is impossible sir Everard will pardon, much less sanction. Return, madam. Come, sir ; these bullies presume upon your years, and make that, which is the strongest claim upon their respect, the cowardly sanction of their licentious ribaldry :— only empower me, as your friend, to protect you, and let who dare insult you.”

Edward hurried them, as fast as old Adam could hobble, into the hall. Scarcely had they entered, before a general laugh assailed their ears from a small eating-parlour, of which the valet, footman, and two postillions of captain Neville had taken possession. Then followed this conversation, with the omission of oaths.

“ Here’s the old cat again, Ned.”

“ Was ever such a queer quiz ! I say,

Jerry, she'd frighten your leaders if you crossed her in a narrow lane."

"She should frighten no more then; for I don't see what use such spavined old devils are of in this world."

"I say, Jerry, what a most delicious bit of fun she would make for lady Emily Roseville's Fanny! That gipsy is so satirical, you know.—How she would take her off!"

Edward was walking slowly across the hall; Adam leaning on one arm, and Mrs. Newton, with no little state, on the other. Disgust was the emotion of his breast, till the name of lady Emily Roseville struck his ear. "Can these wretches,—can this family hold any intercourse with the Rosevilles!" This thought, which darted across his mind, was accompanied with a pain inexpressibly severe, and not to be accounted for.

"Take no notice," said he to his companions.

"But I say, Jerry," continued the valet, "who's that chap between 'em, eh? He's

the best looking fellow I've seen in these parts:—country cut a little; but he's something above the clod-hoppers one sees about the place too."

By this time Edward had seated Adam and Mrs. Newton, whose tongue he confined to silence by his menaces. He then called out authoritatively,

"Are any of captain Neville's servants in the way?"

"The Devil!" exclaimed the valet.
"That's good, however!"

"Come, that'll *do nicely*. If we stand that," cried the footman, "we should be greenhorns."

"Are any of captain Neville's servants in the way?" more loudly called Edward.

A general laugh was the reply. Edward's anger was rising; but the appearance of captain Neville himself averted it for the moment.

"Where are all my scoundrels?" cried the captain.

In an instant the whole groupe were at his elbow, bowing and cringing with every token of the most abject servility.

“Did not you hear yourselves called?”

“Not I, sir.”

“Nor I.”

“Nor I.”

“Nor I.”

Turning with disgust from this specimen of London assurance in livery, Edward addressed himself to the captain.

“I presume I have the honour to address captain Neville?”

“My name is Neville, sir.”

“Mine is Montagu; I reside in this neighbourhood, and have for many years had the pleasure of an acquaintance with the worthy Mr. Osborn, who has so long and so honourably served the Beauchamp family.”

“Oh,...I...believe...I...understand,” drawled out the captain, with an affected gape, twisting the black ribband of an eye-glass.

round his finger. "You mean you have been a kitchen-guest at Beauchamp Abbey during the non-residence of my friend the baronet; but poz, I don't exactly comprehend of what sort of consequence that information can possibly be to me."

"If you will indulge me with a moment's hearing, I flatter myself I shall quicken your comprehension, sir. In a few words then, I consider Mr. Osborn as my friend; and if the situation which he holds in this mansion, as representative of sir Everard Beauchamp; if his exemplary character; if these time-blanch'd locks, on which no vice has left a single spot, are insufficient to command respect from the vulgar minds of captain Neville's servants, I expect that the authority of their master will at least restrain them from the profanation of that virtue which they are too gross to venerate."

"Very heroic, 'pon my honour!" said the captain; "but whether intended for tragedy or comedy, fleece me if I can guess!"

"Sir, I am serious," said Edward with great earnestness.

"Serious!" exclaimed the captain, starting back a pace, and drawing up his mouth with mock gravity. "*Serious*, are you? Oh, then it's tragedy; that's not in my way:—you might as well expect Munden to play the Mourning Bride as that I should be *serious*. Come, come, I see, I see all that you would say, Mr. Mont-thingumme, I beg your pardon, I understand all about it. These fellows of mine have been quizzing old daddy what-you-call-him there, and grinning at the comical cut of old granny's calash:—now that's cursed impertinent of you, ye scoundrels; and, do you hear, if you dare so much as simper at the respectable old gentlefolks, dam'me but I'll break every bone in your skins. Get away with you, scoundrels! Now, sir, any further commands with me?"

Edward, unused to this non-chalant mode of parrying a reproof, was quite confounded. He was about to require some

more solid assurance of future respect to old Adam, and to satisfy himself that the levity of the captain was not intended as a personal insult.

“Your manner, sir,” said he, “is so perfectly new to me——”

“Oh, yes, I perceive that; don’t mention it,” lifting his glass to his eye.

“I have hitherto lived in such retirement——”

“It’s very evident; you need make no apologies; I’m perfectly satisfied; I admire your feeling; it’s a good trait in your character. I assure you I never myself laugh at *old* quizzes, except behind their backs, or after they have been boxed up a century or two, like that old Thurlo-Grumbo there, in an iron night-cap, with an apothecary’s pestle in his hand!”

“Alas! alas!” exclaimed old Adam; “could any of the family but hear such game made of their great ancestor, sir Rodolph, the bravest knight that ever——”

“ Well, but, old daddy,” interrupted the captain, “ sir Rodolph can't hear; and though it's an undoubted law in the code of politeness, that a man should n't laugh in another man's face, there's no statute against quizzing a picture, old boy! Come, come, don't lower the muscles of your face; you can't think how much older it makes you look. In the name of all that's abominable, what does the man snivel at!”

“ You appear, sir,” said Edward, “ not to entertain the same sentiments relative to these badges of the antiquity of a family as this family itself, or you would enter more perfectly into the feelings of their affectionate domestic.”

“ Upon my honour, you talk extremely well for a provincial,” said the captain; “ you have been in London, I presume.”

“ Not since I was an infant.”

“ At Oxford, or Cambridge?”

“ At neither, sir.”

however, sufficiently to impress upon captain Neville a degree of respect for the character of Adam, as sincere as any feeling he was capable of retaining for a quarter of an hour; and by his amiable sentiments, and the unassuming firmness of his manners, he obtained a friend, as far as captain Neville could be a friend, in the man he had expected to make his foe.

Having accomplished thus much, he was about to take his leave.

“Where are you going, you persuasive dog, you?” said captain Neville.

“Home, sir.”

“I’m no conjuror, and therefore cannot guess where everybody’s home is, you know.”

“I live with Mrs. Enfield, at the white cottage in the valley.”

“At Mrs. Enfield’s at the white cottage in the valley!” echoed the captain, clasping his hands, in mock heroics. “How sweetly romantic,—the white cottage in the valley! Pray take pity upon me, and carry

me with you to the white cottage in the valley, for, if I tarry in this most execrable Abbey, I shall certainly expire before morning! Perhaps there may be some amusement for rational creatures in your cottage;—may be, sir, you have a sister whom I could chat with; or you have at least some old aunt or grandmother that one might laugh at a little.”

“Is the ridicule of old age then a favourite source of mirth to you?” said Edward tauntingly.

“I beg pardon,” cried the captain; “but who the deuce would think himself in the company of a philosopher, when he looks at your naked chin? But come, take me from this nursery of blue devils; and if I do not behave like a good boy, serve me as they do children, and threaten to shut me up in this dungeon of an Abbey again!”

Edward, unwilling to introduce this new acquaintance at the cottage, yet equally unwilling to offend him, said,

“Or, what say you, sir, to a walk to

Roseville Park? It is but a short distance. The paintings there will repay the trouble."

"Paintings!—Psha, my good fellow; am I not running away from pictures? But," flourishing his hand, "to Roseville Park with rapture will I fly; for there the spirit of dear lady Emily will, like a beauteous phantasmagoria, before me rise,—as you point out the spot where you have seen her walk, where you have heard her talk!—Come, is n't that heroic? That's in your own style, eh, my lad!" Then, calling to his servants, "Here, Saunders, Jerry, all of you, d'ye hear, rascals, take care you pay all possible respect to this very respectable good-looking old lady and gentleman, who are as it were vergers of this old Cathedral, or Abbey, or whatever they call it; and, d'ye hear, fellows, no laughing nor grinning on your lives, for I'll throw the first of you that grins into the lake, and thus drown you and your mirth together! And as to you, Mr. Osborn, I entreat you to attribute any thing that may

have appeared comical in me, or my fellows, to no ill design. It is because you do not know our way in London that you have been hurt with our merriment. Think no more of it. My friend sir Everard will probably come down before the sale; if not, I'll take care he shall provide handsomely for you and the old lady in the comical calash."

"Sale! Sale!" at once echoed Adam and Edward.

"And can it possibly be true, sir?" said Edward: "Does the baronet really mean to part with antiquities that have so long enriched the Abbey?"

"Yes, he does, my brave fellow; or his mamma does at least, and she wears the breeches: they very wisely think that they have enriched the Abbey long enough, and therefore they resolve that they shall now enrich them.

"Monsters! unnatural monsters!" cried old Adam, striking his head with fury;

"The Abbey to be pillaged by one of its own masters ! Impossible !—Impossible !—'Tis worse than sacrilege—it is self-murder ! My eyes shall never see that hour,—No,—God in mercy will take me to himself before that evil day !"

"What a strange old gentleman !" said the captain, who with all his levity could not unmoved behold the agonies of poor old Adam.

"Oh, had but his noble uncle lived !" continued Adam, "Had *he* but lived to bless us with an heir.—Nothing so monstrous could have issued from his loins !"

"No reflections upon your master, neither, Mr. Adam."

"He my master !—Never !—Never ! His ancestors have been for threescore years my masters ; but he is a degenerate branch of his noble house ; a fallen-off branch from the good old English tree, transplanted to a foreign soil, where it has engrafted itself with an outlandish stock. No wonder then

he is ashamed to face these mere pictures of his noble ancestors ; no wonder that they should prove too much against him !”

Edward did every thing in his power to assuage the grief of his aged friend ; but in vain : for while he was exerting his eloquence to this effect, the auctioneer, who had been looking over the pictures, crossed the hall, and in their hearing addressed captain Neville thus :—

“ Well, captain, I have been looking over the whole of the lumber ; and, unless the baronet can persuade the Antiquarian Society to become bidders for most of the lots, I am sure lord Roseville may get the whole at a public auction for less than he offers ; though in saying this, you know, I speak against myself.”

“ Lord Roseville bid for it !” exclaimed Adam, wildly starting from his seat, “ lord Roseville bid for it !! I see it all now ;—It’s plain enough,—My poor brain burns, Mr. Edward,—May I crave your assistance to my

chamber? Thank God I saw you this morning! Remember my last request. This stroke is too much—too much.—Your arm, sir, your arm. The waiter's son has triumphed now indeed! Oh, God be praised, the noble uncle of this profligate hears not these tidings,—sees not these days!"

He spoke these words with difficulty, and then fainted in the arms of Edward, who conveyed him to his chamber.

"Upon my honour," said the captain, to the auctioneer, half seriously, "I am quite out of my cue here; for, if I understand the interest of this scene, fleece me! What the old gentleman makes such a pother about, appears to me to be the most natural course of things in the world, Mr. Transit. Here is a young fellow comes into possession of an estate, which a long minority has not made very monstrously large, but which is sufficient to purchase the good things of this world; well—he has never seen this fusty old mansion; of course he has no great loving-

kindness for a collection of old armours, pictures, and tapestry hangings; there's nothing wonderful in that."

"Oh, nothing."

"He means to spend his winters only in London, his summers on the continent. Then, tell me, can any thing be more natural than that he should sell for a good price, a parcel of lumber on which he sets no value, for which he has no use?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Well then, lord Roseville has an estate adjoining, and he has long wished to dismantle the Abbey, and convert it into a pile of ruins, as a sort of contrast or foil to his palace. And, if a man can afford to pay for such whims, there's nothing wonderful in his indulging them."

"Oh, nothing."

"Again—lord Roseville is a powerful man; and lord Roseville has a beautiful daughter; I wish to be well with them both—you understand me. Lady Beauchamp

manages sir Everard; I have a little influence with lady Beauchamp, and hence results our gallop into Cumberland, Mr. Transit—you take me. You and I can converse on the road to London about all these matters; for, when people are too indolent to look after their own affairs, no doubt they must pay those who manage for them, for their trouble, eh, Transit? and if you and I make use of our senses, and touch a little of the sweepings of his lordship's counter in Lombard-street by this trip, I am sure there will be nothing marvellous, or even very new in that, eh, Transit?"

"O—oh,—nothing, nothing, captain Neville: I have always found you a sensible man; and as for the heroics of the old steward——"

"Why, we must leave those sort of people to themselves, Mr. Transit; for dam' me if a sensible man can understand their vagaries."

Edward re-appeared.

"Hem!—Here comes young Juba the

second. Well, Mr. Montgomery—Montagu, I beg pardon,—how is the old major domo?"

"Mr. Osborn, sir, is extremely ill; I have deemed it necessary to send for medical assistance."

"The devil you have! Why then, in addition to all the gloom of antiquity already here, we shall presently be beset with a *memento mori*, in the shape of some country Esculapius. Transit, my good fellow, you have seen enough, eh!—nothing more to do now than fix the price?"

"Nothing,—nothing."

"Then we can't do better than place ourselves in the situation of one of your own lots, and be going,—a-going. Here Jerry, Saunders,—scoundrels!"

"Sir! Sir! Sir!" echoed through the hall.

"Are you sober enough, you varlets, to reach the next post-town to-night without risk to my brains or your own bones? If

so, quick, brush! Don't you understand me? Dam'me, if I don't hear the carriage wheels in sixteen seconds you're dead men every one of you!"

Away scampered the men, terrified, but not astonished, being accustomed to his eccentric rapidity. In the same moment captain Neville exclaimed,

"What dilatory scoundrels they are! I can't stand still waiting here all day. Come, Transit, give me your arm; we'll trudge it." Then, turning to Edward; "Will you do me the favour, sir, to tell my fellows that I was out of all patience, and obliged to walk on, to save myself from rheumatism, and the ague, and those sort of things?"

"May I beg leave to trouble you with a few words, captain Neville?" said Edward. "You have mentioned repeatedly the Roseville family."

"My dear sir, I talk of nothing else—I dream of nothing else."

"They are well? I hope."

"Well!—As well as health and prosperity can make human creatures. They are at this moment the wonder and the envy of all London! The vulgar stare at their splendour, till their eyes blink like an owl's at the sun, or a cat's at a kitchen-fire. The great and the powerful sigh at their honours and wealth, till they pine themselves into such specimens of anatomy as Astley Cooper lectures on."

"They are then in London?"

"Oh no,—not yet arrived."

"Did you not intimate that their splendour and——"

"Yes, yes: but that is only by anticipation. Though the curtain is yet undrawn, my fine fellow, the town rings already with the preparations that are making behind the scenes! Zounds! do you never read the newspapers?"

"Yes," replied Edward with naïveté,

"we have The St. James's Chronicle regularly sent us."

"Ha! ha! ha! The St. James's Chronicle! Ha! ha! ha! What, and so I suppose there you pore over an essay on some new discovery in optics; read an account
"how an old mutton-pie-man was run over
"as he was crossing Piccadilly, and taken to
"the Middlesex Hospital; that the lord
"mayor ordered the price of bread to be
"raised one penny in the peck-loaf, and then
"proceeded to open the sessions at the Old
"Bailey." Ha! ha! ha!"

Edward did not exactly comprehend the force of this ridicule; but he perceived he was laughed at, and blushed.

The captain continued—

"My good fellow, you must pardon me; but your ignorance—I mean your ignorance of our world in London—is so amusing, that for the soul of me I can't help laughing. Why, I question if ever you saw the

name of the family even mentioned in the St. James's Chronicle."

"Not that I recollect," said Edward.

"No;—but had you daily read The Morning Chronicle, The Morning Post, The Times, The True Briton, The Oracle, The British Press, The Sun, The Star, The Courier, the Globe, the—the—had you read all or any of these delightful diaries of fashionable life, there you might have seen

"That the earl and countess of Roseville, "with lord Barton and lady Emily, are "expected hourly from the Continent, at "their splendid mansion in Grosvenor "Square." Again, "Lady Emily Rose, "ville, the lovely daughter of the earl and "countess of Roseville, is expected to "eclipse all the hitherto resplendent orbs in "the hemisphere of fashion!" Or, thus again, "As far as beauty, wit, and taste "can add charms to elevated rank and un- "bounded wealth, the lady Emily Rose- "ville, in whose happy person all these

"*delicie* are combined, certainly bids fair to
" outshine every luminary that at present
" enlightens and enlivens the fashionable
" world."

" Are such things relative to lady Emily
really printed?" said Edward.

" Listen again," said the Captain. Then
assuming a grave tone,

" It is NOT true that the duchess of
" Drinkwater has retired in pique from the
" metropolis, at the approach of lady Emily
" Roseville. We have reasons for be-
" lieving that the measure was determined
" upon before the coming out of lady Emily
" was announced. There may be other
" causes assigned for the removal of an esta-
" blishment from the metropolis to Edin-
" burgh, without resorting to any such ill-na-
" tured suppositions. It is not every family
" that can boast the wealth of a Roseville;
" and living is certainly much cheaper in
" Scotland than in England."

" This I suppose was meant in kindness to

the duchess," said Edward ; " but in my mind the contradiction is still more mischievously ill-natured than the assertion. But pray, captain, is it so far true that the family are hourly expected ?"

" True,—as the minute hand of St. Paul's, or the weathercock at Lloyd's,—my dear fellow !"

Edward sighed.

" And is it true," continued he, " that all London are on such tip-toe expectation for their arrival ?"

" Equally true," said the captain. " They divide popularity at present with the fever at Gibraltar, and the young Roscius."

" But is it usual in the fashionable world, sir, for unmarried ladies, like lady Emily, to make so much noise at *coming out*, as you term it ?"

The captain's chaise-and-four drew up.

" Zounds ! here's the carriage," cried the captain. " However, I will stay to explain that to you ; for I perceive, my good

fellow, that there is germ in you; and considering you as a sort of Recluse of the Lake, or Tall Boy of the Mountain, you really promise well. Know, then, that the most dashing *comings-out* ever known are when a very young, rich, lively girl, like lady Emily, marries some dull duke. But as people, you know, can't always be young, the good creatures have invented for themselves a sort of *second-hand coming-out*, in the *debut* of their daughters; in which way they contrive, by a presentation at court, by galas, fêtes, and newspaper éclat, for their daughters, to live their fashionable campaigns once over again; and, under the pretence of introducing these novices of fashion into the world, they themselves participate in the splendour, luxury, and delights of at least one winter more in London. Thus the countess of Roseville, who, poor soul, has been moping these Lord-knows-how-many years among the Alps and the Appennines, poetizing upon Mount St. Gothard, and

making snow-balls upon the Great St. Bernard, will, after such a horrid transportation, doubly enjoy the coming winter in London. For though lady Emily's grand winter will not be until she is marchioness of Arberry, or duchess of Delaware, if old Pomposo would exit; yet, as this winter will begin with her coming out, and end with her marriage, we shall, even at the present hour, contrive to *astonish the natives!*"

"Astonish the natives!" said Edward;
"Pray who are they, sir?"

"Oh, did you never see one? Consult any looking-glass then, and you'll see one to the life.—Adieu, poor native!"

Concluding this speech with a laugh at his own joke, he shook Edward by the hand, with a good nature in his face that rendered it impossible to feel offence at his nonsensical rattle; and then hurrying the auctioneer to his carriage, away they were whirled.

CHAPTER IX.

A FRATRICIDE.

EDWARD, having to a certain degree succeeded in tranquillizing the mind of Adam, quitted the Abbey. On his way to the cottage he once more fell into a reverie upon the important discovery of the morning, and his thoughts were wandering into a maze of contradictory conjectures, when they were suddenly called off by the chiming of the bells belonging to the village church, which in a few minutes struck out a loud and merry peal. Edward started,—his knees shook,—his feet became fixed to the spot where he stood. These bells had been presented to the church by lord Roseville, and were to be rung for the first time upon the arrival of that nobleman at Roseville Park.

The inference was plain. "They are come! —They are come!" exclaimed Edward; and ere he had recovered from the effects of this sudden announcement, men, women, and children were seen running in all directions along the valley, huzzaing and hollaing—"Roseville for ever!"

He hurried to the cottage—it was literally deserted. Mrs. Enfield, Eliza, and their old domestic Hannah, had followed the general impulse, and joined the assembly in the Park, which consisted of nearly the whole population of the parish of Darlington and its environs. Edward threw himself into a chair, and attempted to arrange the confused ideas which the rapid succession of recent events had occasioned.

In the mean time Roseville Park presented the scene of a rustic holiday. A bevy of servants had already arrived; and the bustle of preparation was visible in every apartment. All the avenues were lined with expecting gazers; and the collected groups

were beguiling the time with various sports and frolics.—“Here they come!—Here they come!” was every now and then echoed by some rural wit, who made the disappointment of those believing him the source of laughter to all around.

At length a moving column of dust, accompanied by loud huzzas, the sound of rustic music, and the buzz of an approaching multitude, which had collected from the adjacent villages through which the cavalcade had passed, proclaimed beyond all doubt the arrival of the earl himself. In an instant the Park rung with loud shouts; the beautifully wrought iron gates for the first time unfolded, and two outriders in the most splendid liveries preceded a travelling-coach-and-four, in which rode the upper female servants of the establishment; a post-chariot and four followed, in which were lord Barton, the heir apparent of all this pomp and wealth, attended by his late tutor Dr. Hoare; the third carriage in the cavalcade was a

landau containing lady Emily, whose affable notices of the throng assembled, with her unaffected return to their cheering salutations, won every heart; while the striking beauties of her face and form became the theme of universal admiration. Two other ladies were in the same carriage with her ladyship: these were Italian ladies of distinction, who had accompanied the Roseville family to England, as guests, with the intention of passing a winter in London. In the last carriage, a superb post-chariot drawn by six horses, came the earl and countess of Roseville.

Though Mrs. Enfield and Eliza had unobtrusively mingled in the crowd, yet the expressive eye of the countess caught that of her protégée, and, instantly letting down the glass, she nodded to her with a smile so significant that the heart of Mrs. Enfield immediately felt all the kind remembrances it implied, and made a grateful response by the same eloquent organ.

"Thanks! thanks! lady Roseville," internally exclaimed the delighted Mrs. Enfield: "that look tells me you bestow all the regard which circumstances leave at your own disposal."

- She was just in her conclusion: for lady Roseville had even somewhat exceeded these limits, as the earl broadly hinted, by exclaiming—

"Can't you dispense your civilities without smothering one with dust!"

"I beg your pardon," said her ladyship with unfeigned meekness.

"Who is that woman?"

"Mrs. Enfield."

"What, the person who nursed your foundling?"

"The same."

"Is the boy alive, pray?"

"My dear lord, what a question! 'Twas only yesterday I was asking your opinion respecting some method of disposing of him."

"Indeed! upon my word I have too

many other things to think of, to have any opinion at all about it. Why don't you put him 'prentice?"

"How you forget!—The young man is of age: I mean, he must at least be one-and-twenty years old."

"What! one-and-twenty!—And have you really been squandering away money so inconsiderately as to keep a great boy at dry-nurse till he is one-and-twenty? Upon my honour, lady Roseville, one would almost imagine that you think an establishment like mine is kept up free of all costs and expense: it's really inconsiderate."

"Indeed, my dear lord, you must excuse me if I say I am not to blame in this respect: I have again and again endeavoured to draw your attention to the subject of this poor fellow, but you have never listened to me: I have actually advanced the little remittances which have hitherto supported him out of my own allowances."

"Yes, yes, I can believe you; but have

the goodness, madam, to recollect, if you please, that people who see you twice in one dress are not apprised of your motives for economy; and it would be quite as well to study the reputation of a man of my rank and fortune, as to squander away money in support of idle fellows, old and able enough to earn their own living."

The carriage stopped. Lady Roseville hurried away a tear that would start unbidden, and gave her hand to her lord with a smile.

In the saloon the other travellers awaited the entrance of his lordship to pay their respects; and the whole party then proceeded to an inspection of the interior of a palace on which more than sixty thousand pounds had been expended.

Palmoretti, and his pupil Dubois, received unbounded praises from the earl and his son for the admirable paintings with which they had embellished several of the principal rooms.

"Oh! 'pon my honour," said lord Barton, "they crown you, signior:" then turning to his father, "I am bold to assert, my lord, that we have seen nothing superior on the Continent."

"Your lordship excepts the productions of Raphael, Corregio, Salvator Rosa, and a few others, I presume?" said Dr. Hoare.

"I see no reason, doctor, for the exception," rejoined his lordship: "I venture to say that no Italian master received so much for any of their labours as my father will pay the signior for these performances."

"And yet," replied the doctor, "the family of the Medici, and some of the popes, were tolerably munificent patrons of the arts, too."

"There seems no necessity for this discussion of the comparative merits of dead and living artists and patrons," said the earl, angry at the insinuation of the doctor: "it is sufficient for me that there is certainly

nothing in England that can be compared with such productions as these before us."

"Has your lordship ever seen Barry's paintings, in the room of the Society of Arts and Sciences, in the Adelphi?" said Dr. Hoare dryly.

"Not I," replied the earl; "but you must differ, doctor, from all the world. Look at that picture of Villagers dancing; you surely would not insinuate that any other than an Italian pencil could produce such a painting!—observe particularly the lovely form of that nymph, who with such exquisite grace of attitude is striking the tambourine!"

"It is undoubtedly excellent," said the doctor; "but, surely, my lord, you will not confine perfection to the Italian school!"

"Nay, who have we in England, I ask, that could have produced any thing like it? I appeal to every one present, if they ever

saw such a picture, taken altogether, from the pencil of any English artist."

"I am not, perhaps, sufficiently impartial to judge on this point," said lady Paulina, one of the Italian ladies; "but certainly I never saw a picture which altogether so well pleased me; and that beautiful nymph is the most finished and expressive figure in the group."

"And I have discovered a resemblance to that fine face in lady Emily," said the sister of Paulina.

"Positively you are correct," said lord Barton. "Come here, Emily; here is a portrait of your ladyship, painted by inspiration, when you were a thousand miles distant from the artist."

Every one agreed that the resemblance could scarcely have been more striking had lady Emily sat to the painter.

Lady Emily, who had been asking Palmoretti and Dubois to explain some historical subjects, obeyed the summons.

"O, you flatterers!" said she with vivacity.

"No, really ;—really, no ;" echoed the whole party.

"I will be judged by the painter himself," said lady Selina, who had first discovered the likeness. "Tell me, signior," continued she, addressing Palmoretti, "and tell truly now, is not that portrait very like lady Emily?"

"The impression it has produced proves the powers of recollection," said Palmoretti ; "it was painted as a likeness of her ladyship from memory."

"How!" exclaimed the earl, "designed, signior!—painted from memory!—from the resemblance, too, of a face you scarcely saw for a day?"

"Your lordship will forgive me, I am sure, if I relate the whole affair. That picture is not my production ; but, from the approbation bestowed on it, I am proud to say it is done by a pupil of mine."

"By Dubois!" exclaimed the earl, blushing with shame: "well, I could have staked my fortune it was the work of an Italian! However, doctor, it is still the Italian school."

"True, my lord," observed Palmoretto, "it is by a pupil of the Italian school; but not Dubois: it is the performance of an English youth whom your lordship has adopted, as I am told—young Mr. Montagu."

The earl started, bit his lip, and blushed still a deeper red. Lady Roseville could not resist the expression of—

"I am delighted to hear it! Will not such talents procure the young man a most honourable subsistence, signior?"

"You forget, madam," said Dr. Hoare sarcastically, "the youth is an Englishman."

"Let us look at the library," said the earl with a frown, and led the way immediately.

Lady Emily held down her burning face, while officious memory now presented to her imagination the attentive gazes of the handsome little foundling, who so many years ago had witnessed her dancing on the lawn with the tambourine: the recollection was painful, but she could think of nothing else.

Lord Barton lingered a pace or two behind, looking at the picture, and, affecting great incredulity, yawned out—

“ Well, signior, it would be unpolite, perhaps, to express any doubt of your miraculous story: we have an instance of wonderful genius certainly in Opie, you know; so that I do not positively say, signior, that the thing is impossible!”

By this time the party had entered the library. The chaperone here was the worthy Mr. North, who had been installed librarian.

The earl, with a view to turn attention as quickly as possible from the *adopted*

youth, as Palmoretti had styled Edward, very graciously condescended to introduce Mr. North to Dr. Hoare, as a profound scholar and most exemplary divine. Then presenting, in turn, the doctor to Mr. North, he said—

“ Doctor Hoare, Mr. North; not an ecclesiastic, but an LL. D.; a gentleman in every sense worthy your regard; but one who will differ with you on all subjects, merely to avoid the suspicion of having no opinion of his own.”

“ I can’t agree to that, my lord,” said the doctor.

“ There, I told you so,” said his lordship: “ you see how he confirms my assertion by his contradiction.”

“ What a superb collection of books!” exclaimed lady Paulina; “ and how beautifully arranged!”

“ Yes,” said lord Barton; “ a thing of this sort costs a few English guineas. Have

you a notion what the expense is, sir?" addressing his father.

"No, really," said the earl; "I left the matter entirely to Mr. North here, and to the booksellers."

"I am delighted with your analytical catalogue, Mr. North," said the doctor, turning over the leaves: "it must have occasioned you an immense deal of trouble, and proves a knowledge of books not common even among scholars. I was not many years ago at the marquis of L——'s, in London, who has perhaps as many books as are here; but the titles of hundreds of them were obsolete to the most learned, and therefore remained stationary on the shelves, except to the *curiosi*. This manuscript catalogue is actually a history of literature, a complete bibliography, and renders the library itself unique. I assure your lordship," turning to the earl, "that neither in England nor elsewhere is there so valuable a collection, with so valuable a key."

"We are, then, very much indebted to your labours, Mr. North, I am sure," said the earl.

"The honour of your lordship's approbation," said Mr. North, "I must share with another:—I have received the most valuable assistance in this work from a youth, whose conduct and attainments reflect the highest honour on your lordship's bounty, and must, I am sure, when known, afford you the highest satisfaction; I mean Mr. Edward Montagu."

"Again Mr. Montagu!" exclaimed the earl, knitting his brow; while the countess, though she rejoiced at what she heard, trembled lest the haughty temper of her lord should take alarm at the accomplishments of one whom he deemed nothing more than an object of his charity."

"Pray, who is Edward Montagu?" said lady Selina: "he must be a clever Englishman; I should like to see him."

"O," replied lord Barton, "he is merely

a poor boy that my father accidentally met with at Brighton some years ago, and preserved from the workhouse. He was saved from shipwreck by a Chinese, who died the same hour, I believe. The ship proved to be an Indiaman; but nobody else was saved to tell who or what the infant was; nor does any one know to this hour."

"Why, then," said doctor Hoare, "lady Emily's portrait may be the production of an Italian, after all."

"This is great foolery!" said the earl, stepping out of the library upon a fine lawn level with the floor.

He was followed by the rest. They promenaded the pleasure-grounds and part of the park. A variety of observations were made upon the picturesque scenery which embellished the landscape; and the antique towers of Beauchamp Abbey, forming the grandest object in the perspective, afforded an ample source of conversation. Lord Roseville and the gentlemen, with lady

Emily, had loitered to examine some antique statues sent by his lordship from Italy. The countess and her two guests formed a separate group. The following dialogue ensued.

Lady Paulina. "What is that venerable pile of building called?"

Lady Roseville. "Beauchamp Abbey."

Lady Paulina. "Is it a place of worship?"

Lady Roseville. "No—It is the family-seat of a baronet of that name."

Lady Selina. "Beauchamp! Beauchamp! —Don't you recollect, Paulina, a strange story about two brothers of that name, English residents at Florence?"

Lady Paulina. "Perfectly well, Selina.—Can it relate to this family?"

Lady Roseville. "It certainly does. The history of these two brothers is to this hour a tale of mystery."

Lady Selina. "May we not be favoured with it, Lady Roseville?"

Lady Roseville. "It is told in few words."

Alfred and Everard were the only children of sir Alfred Beauchamp. As the estates of this very antient family had not increased in value with the increasing expenses of its magnificent establishment, its revenues were by no means equivalent to its splendour. Unhappily a contested election for the county, followed by petitions to the legislature, and a long series of law-suits, involved the estate so much further in debt, that, when sir Alfred succeeded to the title, he found himself in the most painful situation in which a man of honour and feeling can be placed: he was called upon to support the dignity of an antient and noble family, represented in his person, almost without any pecuniary means. Sir Alfred, however, was endowed with great and good qualities of mind. He soon formed a resolution, which combined the promise of adding to his fortune with the present retrenchment of expenditure. Confiding to an old and faithful domestic at the Abbey, Adam Osborn, the

sacred charge of his lady and the two sons I have already named, he repaired with the spirit of old times to the camp of Frederic of Prussia, and under that great general sought for increase of wealth by the only means to which, in his opinion, a descendant of the Beauchamps could without degradation submit.

“ During his long absence lady Beauchamp and her sons constantly resided at the Abbey. The most rigid economy and frugality marked the conduct of the good mother, who, fully qualified for the task, superintended the education of her boys personally, and with no other assistant than the curate of Darlington, until the eldest was about twelve years old,—when it pleased the disposer of events to bereave them for ever of their excellent mother. Never shall I forget the different impressions which this event produced upon the two boys. Alfred, whose bosom was the seat of generous emotions, strove like a little hero to conceal the

tears of genuine sorrow, that, 'spite of his efforts, graced his cheek; while Everard's art was exerted to assume a mock sorrow, which he did not feel. Alfred felt that he had lost a friend—a confidant—an instructor.—Everard had never without reluctance submitted to instruction—never without anger yielded to restraint;—and though then scarcely eleven years old, he congratulated himself that he should now be his own master; and, in the joy he felt at his imagined freedom, he soon lost even the semblance of grief.

“The news of his lady's death reached the baronet at Breslau the day after a most important victory had scattered laurels on every follower of Frederic's fortune. The share of glory which this English warrior had obtained in that memorable battle was however most dearly purchased. He received a wound, which, though not fatal at the moment, was attended with such consequences as precluded all hopes of recovery. The

melancholy tidings from England increased his danger, and seemed to hasten his dissolution. To a brother officer, an Irishman, whom chance placed near him, he expressed a father's wish to see his boys. The nature of his wounds rendered it impossible that he himself should travel; and it appeared almost romantic that the children should be sent for from such a distance—yet it was his wish. It seemed as if he could not die until he had beheld his offspring. Under the care of faithful Adam Osborn, the two brothers reached their father's quarters, where they arrived barely in time to receive his blessing, and to behold him die.

Lady Paulina. “Unfortunate man! And how worthy, in human estimation, of a happier destiny! But the poor boys, dear lady Roseville, what must have been their feelings on such an occasion!”

Lady Roseville. “Many a time have I listened to old Adam's description of the scene;—Alfred melted into tears—but Eve-

rard was unmoved ;—Alfred was with difficulty day after day torn from his father's corpse—but Everard in a few hours turned all his thoughts to the glittering tinsel of the warriors around him. Delighted with the dazzling scenery and lively bustle of the camp, scarcely was his father laid in a foreign grave, when he expressed to the officer before alluded to his wish to be a soldier. In vain old Adam urged him to return, in vain his brother supplicated.—“ He would not,” he said, “ go back to England, to be sent to school or college; he would remain with captain Morrison.”

Lady Selina. “ And did he actually remain ?”

Lady Roseville. “ By sir Alfred's will the guardianship of his sons was intrusted to my father, who was his neighbour—Darlington Hall standing at that time on the very spot where we are now walking.

“ Captain Morrison wrote to my father, and represented in such strong terms the then ex-

isting feelings of Everard, and the promised patronage of the King of Prussia himself for his future advantage, that with reluctance, he at length consented to his continuance under the protection and tuition of the captain. Alfred in the mean time returned. The long minority before him, and the advantages already reaped from frugality and retrenchment promising to restore in a considerable degree the antient splendour of his inheritance by the time he would become of age, my father spared neither expense nor pains in suitably educating the young baronet for that rank in society which he seemed destined to enjoy.

“The male branches of the Beauchamp family were extinct, except in the present line; and the only relation of these two boys, who survived their father, was a sister of their mother, who was settled in America. My father's roof, therefore, became the home of young Alfred; and, under the eye of the best of fathers and mothers, he, my brother,

and myself were educated. With what feelings of regret do I take a retrospect of these days!—Health—peace—joys ever present—and hopes ever new, were mine for seven happy years of my existence!”

Lady Selina. “This little history, I see, dear madam, leads you to a subject which I know always pains you.”

Lady Roseville. “I will only slightly glance at the event alluded to. An attachment, founded on mutual esteem—why should I not say love?—took place between the noble Alfred and myself. We plighted to each other vows of inviolable faith, and the prospect of our future union was contemplated with satisfaction and approbation by both my parents. When Alfred was rather more than twenty years old, an opportunity presented itself of his travelling in company with a tried and worthy friend of his guardian. He embarked for Holland, with the intention of passing through France, Italy, and Spain, meaning to return about

that time two years to England, when it was arranged that our marriage should take place.

“ Oh, how eventful were those two years! In the first year, the death of a beloved mother was quickly followed by the loss of a noble-hearted, but unfortunate, not to say indiscreet, brother. The next spring brought from Florence the dreadful tidings contained in the story of the two brothers, which lady Selina recollected at the mention of Beauchamp Abbey.—I was not aware till that moment that the story was still remembered in Italy.”

Lady Paulina. “ I have heard it a hundred times related by the countess, my aunt, who happened to be on a visit to the marchesa della Mekzi, at the very time.”

Lady Roseville. “ I have heard the story told with so many variations, that it would oblige me, lady Paulina, if you could recollect the exact particulars, and would repeat them. I would then far myself explain—

that Everard Beauchamp received such an education, and imbibed such principles, as might naturally have been expected from his residence in such a camp. His very instructor and guide, captain Morrison, was an example of all that is profligate and licentious; with only the virtue of courage, to balance almost every other vice which can degrade humanity. Formed after such a model, and in such a school, with a disposition naturally inclined rather to the ferocious than the gentle, Everard, at the age of eighteen, was as manly in appearance, and as experienced in licentiousness, as any of the many adventurers who had brought to the camp of Frederick specimens of all the vices of all the capitals of Europe.

“Such an one was Everard, when, previously to the departure of Alfred from England, it was arranged that the brothers should have an interview at the palace of the marchesa Melzi.”

Lady Paulina. “It was there, lady Rose-

vile, as I have before observed, that the countess Belvidere, my aunt, was on a visit, when the handsome Englishman, as Mr. Everard Beauchamp was styled, arrived with his friend, captain Morrison, and the young marquis Melzi, then nearly of age. How the marquis first became acquainted with young Beauchamp, I never understood; but a similarity of manners, dispositions, and pursuits, appeared to unite this triumvirate in the strictest bonds of association. The mother of the young marquis was fond of her son to a weak and ridiculous extreme. He was guilty of the most vicious excesses; yet, in her eyes, he was a paragon of virtue; and, though the whole city of Florence rung with reprobation of his profligate conduct, the marchioness could never bear to be told that her son had a failing. Everard Beauchamp, Morrison, and the marquis made the Melzi palace merely their occasional rendezvous for dining, or sometimes supping. They never slept within its walls. When this cir-

cumstance was noticed to the old lady, she would reply in the common-place way, that young men would be young men; and one could not put old heads on young shoulders.

"When the day for sir Alfred Beauchamp's arrival was fixed, these three friends suddenly changed their course of action. My aunt happened accidentally to overhear the reason for this from captain Morrison.

"The old quiz that accompanies this virtuous elder brother of yours," said he to Everard, 'would smoke us in an instant, and would be hurrying the grown baby away from us in a moment, lest we should corrupt his saintship; and our work, my dear boy, can't be done in a minute, you know, eh, Melzi, can it? So, surely, my boys, it's worth while to be cautious, if we mean to succeed.'

"Who doubts success?" cried Everard; 'I'd strike the blow myself, if needful, man. This arm has not sent so many poor devils to the shades, who never injured me,

to shrink at last from the man who stands between me and a princely fortune; for I find guardee has nursed it to some purpose."

"A loud laugh succeeded this horrid speech, and enabled my aunt to retreat unobserved from an accidental concealment.

"Convinced that it would be merely waste of time to suggest her fears to the marchesa, she determined to keep a strict watch herself upon the actions of the trio, and to warn the baronet of his danger, if circumstances should induce her to believe it necessary.

"Sir Alfred Beauchamp arrived, with his venerable friend Mr. Montagu."

Lady Roseville. "One of the worthiest beings that ever wore the form of man. He was the Mentor of sir Alfred, as he had been my father's. He was idolized in our family; and it was from respect to his memory, you must know, that I named the unfortunate shipwrecked infant—Edward Montagu."

Lady Paulina. "The first few days after their arrival passed without any incident that

strengthened the apprehension of my aunt ; and she began to cherish a hope that she had mistaken the purport of the dialogue she had overheard, when her suspicions were too fatally confirmed.

“ One evening it was proposed by Everard Beauchamp, and agreed to by the other two gentlemen, that they should visit the opera. My aunt, attended only by her maid, followed them, to observe their motions. During the performance the party separated ; sir Alfred and Mr. Montagu were left alone ; Everard, Morrison, and the marquis Melzi entered the box of a beautiful stranger, then lately arrived at Florence from Naples, who passed for a person of quality, and who, though extremely young, had established a reputation for extraordinary powers of mind perverted to the worst of purposes. My aunt remarked with horror the significant gestures and repeated pointing to the baronet, which took place in signora Belloni's box. She hesitated in her determination,

whether to go immediately and reveal her fears to the baronet, or to continue her attentions upon the party she suspected. While she doubted, the signora and her two friends left their box, and in a few minutes entered that where sir Alfred and his friend were listening to the opera. In a few minutes more they all disappeared together, though the opera had scarcely begun. My aunt hurried home overwhelmed with apprehension. Her fears were increased, when she was informed that the count's servants had returned for flambeaux and fire-arms, as the party had gone to sup at a villa belonging to signora Belloni, a few miles from Florence.

“Midnight arrived, and the marchesa Bellvedere was retiring to her chamber with a foreboding heart, when a general confusion throughout the palace soon proclaimed the fatal tidings, that the party had been attacked in a wood by banditti; that the marquis, Morrison, and Everard Beauchamp had escaped with severe wounds, but that the baronet

and his friend, it was feared, had fallen a sacrifice to the savage cruelty of the assassins. Immediate search was made by the officers of justice, and the mangled remains of the two unfortunate Englishmen stripped and disfigured with ghastly wounds, were discovered in a foss, where the murderers had thrown them."

Lady Roseville. "Oh, horrible! horrible! Never will this heart be healed of the deep wound which it received, when the horrid tidings reached us here;—nor can I with the greatest stretch of charity acquit the brother of my ever-lamented Alfred of the guilt of being at least accessory to the barbarous murder."

Lady Selina. "The wounds of him and his hardened companion might possibly have been self-inflicted."

Lady Paulina. "It was so whispered at the time. At least they soon were healed; and, to the surprise of every one, no further inquiry into the affair was ever made by the

surviving Beauchamp; who, assuming the title of his brother, as I suppose you well know, very shortly after the interment of sir Alfred, publicly espoused signora Belloni."

Lady Roseville. "Too well I know each circumstance that followed—But for the present we will waive the subject—The gentlemen approach—Lord Roseville is entitled to my best affections as a husband and a father, and I would on no account give him cause to think he has a widowed heart in mine."

Lady Selina. "Ah, dear lady Roseville, how much do we all owe to your noble example! Three deaths in two short years!—A mother—a brother—and a betrothed lover! How many of our weak sex, even with the best of hearts, would have sunk beneath the weight of such accumulated misery—while you——"

Lady Roseville. "Oh, not on me—not on me, my love, bestow this praise. If my

poor heart has been enabled to endure, with some degree of christian fortitude; those arrows of affliction, which the hand of time itself cannot extract, theirs be the merit, who in earliest infancy instilled into my mind those sacred truths, which teach mankind justly to appreciate all temporal good and evil; which, raising the soul above the grovelling impulses of self, lead it, and sustain it, in a course of duties worthy of its celestial nature! But for this conviction, all the glories of creation would have faded to my sight when Alfred Beauchamp died. 'Twas then a father's voice recalled me to a recollection of what I owed to him—to society—to God. 'Twas then, too, that I saw the ravages which adversity had inflicted on the best of men—and by slow degrees I wrung from his afflicted heart the secret of his irreparable ruin, the sad consequence of an only son's imprudence. Roused by a sense of my dear father's anguish, I lived again for his sake. To alleviate his sufferings—to abate his griefs—to tranquil-

lize his heart's despair, became new motives for existence. Soon I saw how much of such a task depended on the sacrifice of every selfish feeling. I saw a path to which filial duty pointed, and filial affection led—I married Mr. Dickens.”

Lady Paulina. “Admirable Lady Roseville!”

Lady Selina. “Ah, Paulina! where shall we find excuse, if, under such a monitress, we——”

Lady Roseville. “Hush, dear ladies—I cannot listen to such unmerited encomiums: and, see, we are observed.”

Doctor Hoare (joining them). “So, madam, this Mr. Montagu is to be the universal theme at Roseville Castle.”

Lady Roseville. “How so, sir?”

Dr. H. “Nay—you recollect his exhibition of paintings in the saloon, and his literary fame in the library.—Well, madam.—The earl was admiring some classical verses, placed under a head of Cicero, in the myr-

the walk, in which a very neat compliment to the Roseville family is introduced; when, turning to Mr. North, "We are obliged to you for this, sir," said his lordship.—"No, my lord," says the parson; "the thought and the poetry are both Mr. Montagu's."

Lady Paulina. "I am impatient to behold this prodigy."

Dr. H. "But that is not all, ladies. Passing the tennis-court, we looked in, to see a painting by Dubois. On the floor lay some foils. Lord Barton took one in his hand, and, flourishing it, displayed considerable elegance of attitude; at the same time exclaiming—"Pray, who fences here? I observe the foils have been used."—"I have taught Mr. Montagu," said the Frenchman; "but his agility and skill are now too much for his master."—"Montagu fence!" exclaimed lord Barton; "I think he at least might have been more usefully employed."

"Now, there's envy in that sneer, my good brother," said the dear lady Emily;—

and do you know, madam, I could have kissed her for such a timely rebuke of my friend."

Lady R. "It is not the first proof of your good heart and sound judgment I have had the pleasure of observing, Dr. Hoare."

By this time they had arrived at the house, which they entered through the music-room, where the earl and his party were already assembled. Several instruments were out of their place, and some sonatas of Haydn were lying open.

"Pray," said lord Barton, addressing himself with a sneer to Dubois, "does not this rustic prodigy sing, dance, and play, as wonderfully as he fences, paints, and poetizes?"

"The signor, my lord," replied Dubois, "has taken great pains to improve the taste which monsieur Montagu displays on the violoncello; and the young gentleman, I assure you, does honour to the signor. I cannot say much for his dancing, though I

have bestowed great pains ;—and, as to his singing, it is but la la. His voice is good too ; but he likes better to exercise it in the orations of Cicero, the speeches of Hamlet, Macbeth, Cato, and such kind of things, than in vocal music.”

“ Upon my word,” said the earl to his son, “ I cannot help saying this is all very ridiculous. You surely estimate my company at somewhat too cheap a rate, to pursue this trifling. What is your subject?—A foundling, whom, thrown in our way, we undertook to save from perishing. I declare to you, Doctor,” turning to Dr. Heate, “ I declare that, in the multifarious concerns which press upon my attention, I had absolutely lost all recollection of the existence of such a person, till lady Roseville recalled him to my memory within this hour. And now this brat, whom, nineteen years ago, I saved from the workhouse, starts up in every corner of my mansion, claiming honours, and blandishing talents, as if he were the

their apparent to my title and fortune. How it has all happened, is an enigma, the solution of which I shall not condescend to study.—If it please lady Roseville to explain——”

Meekness and timidity were naturally lady Roseville's; while habit and respect combined to impress still more strongly upon her feelings humility towards her lord, and a painful sense of his displeasure. She blushed, she trembled, and was silent.

Mr. North, who possessed both discrimination and feeling, saw at a glance the hearts of the earl and his lady; and, by the dextrous use of an artifice which humanity prompted, at once healed the wounded sensibility of the countess, and gratified the pride of the earl.

“It is I, my lord,” said he, “am to blame; and, however painful the weight of your lordship's displeasure must prove, I will not presume to question its justice, if

your lordship repels the plea I shall take the liberty of urging in my defence."

Lady Roseville and the whole party fixed their attention upon the speaker. He continued—

"Upon my arrival here, my lord, I found this extraordinary youth, who owes every thing he possesses to your bounty, blessed with such natural powers as fall to the lot of few; and with a disposition in which I could discover nothing to wish altered, unless it were a fondness for solitude, and the indulgence of romantic fancies. I attributed this tincture of mind in a great degree to his peculiar destiny, to his retired and inactive mode of life, under a roof where only females dwelt, and in a neighbourhood which furnished him with no congenial associates. There was an ingenuous display of talent as well as virtue in the boy, that, independently, of my knowledge of his story, interested me exceedingly; and, flat-

tering myself that I should be performing at the same time no unacceptable duty to my honoured patrons, I officiously obtruded myself into his society, and succeeded in gaining his confidence and respect. I soon discovered that Edward Montagu had formed an accidental acquaintance with one, whose prejudices were calculated to produce in his inexperienced mind impressions derogatory of your lordship's character and dignity. The old domestic of Beauchamp Abbey, Adam Osborn, had won the heart of the young lover of romance; and, when I became first known to him, had almost intoxicated him with a silly, yet enthusiastic, veneration of old times, old families, old castles, and old follies of every description. Fortunately, the wealth, the taste, and magnificence displayed in this mansion of your lordship, furnished a most apt and admirable antidote to this disease of mind; and I own I did not hesitate to administer the benefit of its use to young Montagu. I it was,

my lord, who brought him to this mansion, and have joined with signor Palmoretti and monsieur Dubois in imparting to him those lessons which I now perceive, for the first time, it was not your lordship's intention he should receive."

"You have laboured to prove, Mr. North, what I should never have doubted—that your motives are good. I confess, I imputed to lady Roseville here, whose kindness of heart, we all know, outstrips the judgment of her head, the good-natured folly of manufacturing that grotesque animal in society—'an accomplished pauper.' And I am sorry, for the young man's sake, that the mistake I have made is not in the article itself, but simply in the manufacturer."

"I cannot join in your lordship's pity," said Dr. Hoare, "'tis misplaced. In my mind, Mr. North has rendered society a service.—We have too few geniuses at the present day, to spare one for the cobbler's last or the plough-share ;—though, thank God,

we have taken a Bloomfield from one, and a Burns from the other!—and I cannot help saying, that I think it would confer more lasting honour on the name of Roseville, to rescue one such youth of talent from obscurity, than to build a church or found an hospital, and I know the family is rich enough for either.”

The frown on the brow of the earl at the commencement of this speech was changed to a half smile at the sequel.

“Compliment and contradiction in a breath, eh, Doctor?” said he. “Well,—we’ll see this genius, as you style him, before we leave Roseville; and, as circumstances have thrown him upon us, we will not desert him if we find he merits our favour. Enough of our time, however, has been bestowed upon the subject; and I must request that we take leave of this romance for the present. I am by no means displeased with your conduct, Mr. North; I only regret that important engagements have hither-

to so much occupied my attention, that I have suffered the young man to remain so long in such an idle state of life. Some employment must be thought of for him; but at present a thousand other things call for our attention."

The conversation ended here, and the party separated. Lady Roseville blessed Mr. North for his timely interference—Lord Barton whistled—Dr. Hoare expressed a wish to see "the extraordinary young man"—the ladies Paulina, Selina, and Emily Roseville, all united in the same wish. Even when they retired, the story of the foundling of the ocean did not cease to occupy their meditations.

CHAPTER X.

AN ACCIDENT.

THE party at Roseville Park was augmented the following day by the arrival of the duke of Delaware, and his son the marquis of Arberry, between whom and lady Emily Roseville a matrimonial treaty was nearly brought to a conclusion by the heads of both their houses.

The marquis of Arberry was in his thirtieth year; and possessed, independently of his father, a considerable fortune bequeathed to him by a maternal uncle. He was indebted to nature for a happy disposition and a handsome person; and by his fascinating manners he rendered himself the universal favourite among a very large circle of the fashionable world, of which he

might almost be said to be the emperor.— His ample revenues, the elegance of his taste, and his unceasing studies after new methods to amuse and delight, occasioned him to be regarded as a model of manners among the very first ranks of society; and he had obtained the reputation of being the first gentleman in the kingdom.

The intimacy between the duke of Delaware and lord Roseville took place at Madrid; and the former, who arrived in England some months previous to the latter, immediately proposed to his son the lucrative alliance. It so happened that the marquis had just then broken off an attachment to a faithless mistress; and had, with a mixed feeling of resentment and remorse, actually begun to think of marriage. There occurred only one objection to lady Emily, whom he had never seen, and that was the origin of her paternal grandfather. Against this unfortunate blemish in the

escutcheon of the lady, the nobility of her mother was to be balanced; and the present rank and fortune of her father, added to his great ministerial influence, it was prudently suggested by the duke, who was not opulent, were more than sufficient to obliterate the memory of the founder of their wealth. The object of the present visit was to take a preliminary survey of the offered bride, and to digest the articles of this family alliance;

A slight acquaintance with lady Emily was sufficient to impress the marquis with a *quantum sufficit* of respectful regard for a modern husband in high life; that is to say, he could discover nothing in her person, mind, or manners, so disgusting as to render it impossible to sit with her in the same carriage occasionally, and now and then to spend a few hours with her under one roof.

Lady Emily on her part had no attachment of the heart; she knew not love as a passion; and the veneration and affection she felt

for her parents, induced her implicitly to follow their counsels, which she regarded as infallible, and to study their pleasure, which was her chief source of happiness. She received therefore the marquis as her destined lord, and he regarded her as his bride elect.

It was after a few days' consultation agreed that the ensuing winter should be devoted to the initiation of lady Emily among the votaries of fashion, and her introduction to the fashionable world: and that on the Birth-day, which closes the fashionable winter, she should be presented as marchioness of Arberry.

The few weeks which were to be passed previously to their entering the metropolis, were to be divided between Roseville Park and Delaware Hall, in Derbyshire; and with a view of exorcising the dæmons of ennui from the lakes and lawns, and hills and dales, where an inhabitant of the fashionable world is in such constant dread of encountering them, several priests of

pleasure were invited to mingle with the society at both these places.

While such was the state of affairs at Roseville Park, the mind of Edward Montagu underwent the severest trials. Old Adam continued very ill.—This circumstance distressed him. But his heart was tortured beyond description by the continued absence and silence of the mysterious stranger, who had called himself his father.—What was he to think? At times he was almost ready to exclaim with Hamlet—“The thing, which I have seen may be the devil! What purpose can it answer,” he would inquire, “to any human being to take such pains merely to torment? Why did he appear to me at all, if he came only to raise within my bosom high-swelling hopes of emancipation from the humble, the distressing obscurity and dependence of my present state, which are never to be realized?”

There was another source of painful disappointment.—The incessant occupation of

her time by necessary attentions to her guests, and other important avocations, had hitherto prevented even lady Roseville from calling at or sending to the cottage. This apparent neglect added mortification to disappointment, and weighed down the spirits of Edward to a state of absolute despondency, which seriously alarmed Mrs. Enfield and Eliza for his health and intellects.

Some days after the arrival of the family at the Park had elapsed, when Edward, thus musing to madness on his fate, lay reclined on the borders of the lake, at a short distance from the cottage. It was noon; his eyes rested on the reflected image of the sun, and vacantly watched the clouds as they appeared to sail across the golden orb. Suddenly a shriek, loud and continued, thrilled in his ears—he started up, and with terror and surprise saw a phaëton, in which sat a lady, rapidly and irresistibly drawn by two horses towards the lake. In vain he threw himself before

the maddened animals—in vain he called to the lady to leap from her dangerous seat. In another moment, horses and carriage were plunged into the lake.

The shrieks of the lady, and the cries of Edward, brought out several inhabitants of the village, besides Mrs. Enfield and Eliza, who reached the spot just in time to see the generous Edward rush into the water. He succeeded in rescuing the lady, and bore her in his arms to land. By this time a gentleman, who proved to be the marquis of Arberry, arrived, with one servant; and presently after came a large party, on horses and in carriages, at full speed.

It was lady Emily Roseville, whom Edward at the hazard of his own life had thus nobly snatched from death. She was conveyed to all appearance dead into the cottage of Mrs. Enfield, where, by the application of proper means, she was restored to some degree of sensibility just as the earl and countess, her parents, entered the apartment.

"Oh, where is my child?—where, where is my dearest Emily?" exclaimed the countess.

"My mother!—my mother!" said the half-recovered Emily, throwing her arms round her neck, and hiding her face in her bosom: "Oh, my dear mother, I am safe—I am safe—but where is my brave preserver? Seek him, my honoured father, seek him, and reward him for the life of your poor Emily."

"Reward him?" cried the earl, in whose breast, however cold in general, nature now kindled the flame of gratitude—"reward him?—Impossible! Who is he?—where is he?—Let me know him!—let me kneel and thank him for a daughter's life!"

Mrs. Enfield, her heart almost bursting with joy and triumph, said,

"O, my lord, he is rewarded—he is more than rewarded, by such a recovery as this! Of all the beings in the world, none could have felt the gratification which I am

sure he feels. Any man would rejoice to save a fellow-creature; but Edward Montagu has not only saved a human being to the world—he has restored a daughter to his benefactor!”

“Edward Montagu!” exclaimed the earl.

“Edward Montagu!” echoed lady Roseville and the ladies Paulina and Selina, while each surveyed the countenance of the other with an expression that seemed to say, “Surely every title to praise is monopolized by Edward Montagu!” Lady Emily was silent: she held down her head, and, with her arms folded across her bosom, whispered a fervent prayer to Heaven for blessings on her preserver.

The earl quitted the room in search of Edward: he found him still in his wet clothes, surrounded by the whole party from Roseville Park, who were overwhelming him with praises.

Pride did not yield her victim without a struggle; but the father at length triumphed over the peer. “Mr. Montagu,” said

the earl, breaking in upon them, "Mr. Montagu, we meet, for the first time, under very singular circumstances and impressions."

"Happy, my lord," said Edward, "will it render the orphan of your bounty, till the day of his death, that Heaven has made him the instrument of averting so great a calamity from his benefactor!"

"Sir, all obligation to me is cancelled from this hour," rejoined the earl:—"I must for ever remain your debtor; but I will at least endeavour to do justice to your noble qualities, which ought certainly to have been better known to me before this occasion had thrust them upon my notice. If, however, I have been slow in the acknowledgment of your merit, I flatter myself that I have the means of atoning for my injustice.—Accept, then, my hand, in token of the thanks of my heart."

A tear was the only reply that Edward, thus overpowered with unexpected condescension and kindness, could make to his benefactor.

One of the carriages being prepared for lady Emily, the party now returned to the Park, whither Edward was requested to follow them, as soon as he had thrown off the dripping symbols of his courage and humanity.

The effects of her accident, though of no dangerous complexion, confined lady Emily to her chamber for the rest of the day; and the female part of the company were her voluntary prisoners.

Edward was thus left entirely to the scrutiny and observation of the gentlemen. Lord Roseville studied for opportunities of evincing his kindness: he overwhelmed his new favourite with expressions of gratitude and admiration: he seemed absolutely delighted with a new object on which to display his ostentation; and, besides complimenting Edward on his talents, declared that his want of fortune should be no obstacle to his success in the army, at the

bar, or in the church,—the choice of which he yielded unreservedly to himself.

Nothing could exceed the illiberal spleen of lord Barton at this unexpected kindness of his father towards the foundling; while, on the other hand, the marquis of Arberry, whose misfortune it was to have been the author of the accident, by first carelessly dropping the reins, and then leaping from the phaeton to recover them, seemed to feel, equally with the earl himself, the value of the noble act which Edward had performed.

To the spirit of politeness, therefore, which always shone conspicuously in the marquis, was now superadded an ardent desire of showing his gratitude to the preserver of his destined bride; and Edward found in him an excellent antidote for the supercilious conceit of lord Barton. That profound learning and that knowledge of mankind, for which Dr. Hoare was universally admired,

were; at the same time, successfully exerted with a generous design of affording the new favourite an opportunity of displaying talents with which he conceived it would be for his interest that lord Roseville and the marquis should be acquainted.

It was thus that, when he had almost relinquished every hope of being noticed by his patron, Edward was suddenly elevated from the state in which he had hitherto lived, into the splendid sphere of high rank and fashion :—for the earl intimated his resolution that he should, from that hour, consider him an inmate of his own family, until he should finally place him in some situation worthy of his talents, and equal to his merits.

On the following day lady Emily was so much recovered that she determined to meet the family at dinner. She had already been informed of the conduct of lord Roseville towards her preserver, and was consequently aware that he now made one of the party

at the Park. She had listened with interest to the exaggerated description which both Selina and Paulina gave of his person; the one expatiating upon the expression and beauty of his countenance, and the other declaiming upon the elegant symmetry and manly grace of his figure, as surpassing every thing which they had imagined of a mortal. Had lady Emily now for the first time heard the name of Edward Montagu, the enthusiastic panegyrics which these Italian ladies bestowed upon him were sufficient to have excited an ardent curiosity in a far colder breast. But when she connected with that name the interest which his story first impressed upon her infantile imagination, and the admiration which she in common with all the party felt at the display of his wonderful talents on the day of their arrival at Roseville Park, where, above all, she recognised in him the benevolent being who had hazarded his own life for her preservation; when such a combination of ideas and

sensations rushed upon her mind, her desire to behold the extraordinary object which had occasioned them became vehement, almost to disease. To prevent the awkwardness which would attend their meeting for the first time at the dinner-table, it was arranged that lord Roseville should detain Edward in the library, where the countess should conduct lady Emily.

It was now the moment, when, leaning upon the arm of her mother, she descended to the library. Whether it were accident or design, it so happened that never before did lady Emily in dress or person appear so lovely. Her complexion ever fair was now rendered still more beautiful by the agitation of her mind, which suffused the delicate whiteness of her transparent skin with the rich redness of a new-born rose. Her dress was elegantly simple: her head was unadorned: a white robe floated loosely round her; and, as she moved, an unaffected mo-

desty and a graceful innocence accompanied her steps.

Lord Roseville had started to Edward the subject of the war with Spain, and the probable seizure of the Plata ships; which gave the latter an opportunity of displaying to his patron a knowledge of the law of nations which astonished him.

Edward was in the act of pointing out to his lordship a doubtful passage in Grotius, when the doors of the library were thrown open, and lady Emily, supported by the countess, entered and curtsied. The book fell from the hand of Edward, his feet were fixed to the floor, his eyes on the lovely object that enchanted him; while to her he appeared far more graceful, handsome, and intelligent, than the most exaggerated description had induced her to imagine.

“Mr. Montagu,” said the earl, “lady Emily Roseville, my daughter, and the countess, her mother, come to offer you

their grateful acknowledgments for an act of heroism and humanity, which, while it reflects upon you the highest honour, imposes upon every member of this family the most lasting obligation."

Lady Emily now approached, and in a tremulous tone of voice, scarcely audible, expressed her gratitude to Edward. With rather more firmness, but with no less emotion, he replied, "that he should for ever consider that day the happiest and most glorious of his life, which blessed him with the opportunity of being serviceable to so valuable a member of a family to whom he was indebted for every thing he possessed."

Ere the countess could deliver the thanks which hovered on her lips, the library door again opened, and the duke of Delaware and his son appeared.

"Do we intrude, my lord?" said the duke.

"By no means," said the earl: "your grace and that careless charloteer are both

interested in the present scene. However, we will waste no more time in words, but unite in considering in what manner we can best reward this young hero. In truth, Arberry, I know not if some thanks are not due to you after all; for, such is the pressure of multiplied concerns upon my time and attention, it is more than probable, that, but for this carelessness of yours, I might never have known the uncommon merit and most extraordinary talents of my young friend here."

Edward bowed; a blush reddened his cheeks; and the eyes of lady Emily, full of interest, rested on his countenance.

"I will not repeat the thanks I have already offered to Mr. Montagu," said the marquis. "He will, I am sure, do me the justice to believe that the recovery of a treasure such as this (taking the hand of lady Emily), which it will ever be my reproach to have so nearly lost, cannot be deemed by me a common obligation, or be acknow-

ledged in common-place declarations of gratitude ; but my actions, I trust, will better illustrate my feelings."

" Indeed—indeed," said Edward, " my share in this happy restoration is altogether over-rated. The gem preserved, I grant, is above all price, unique, inestimable; but the hand that fortunately preserved it did but its duty, and must have done the same thing, in the same circumstances, for the most inferior of his fellow-creatures."

Here another interruption ensued by the entrance of lord Barton and Dr. Hoare, who offered their congratulations to lady Emily ; and the conversation became general, till they adjourned to the dining-room.

The space of time occupied in this interview between lady Emily and Edward Montagu was short ; but it was sufficient to give birth to feelings in the bosoms of both, which till that interview neither had experienced.

The first effect of this new sentiment is

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lady Emily was a comparison between him for whom she indulged it, and him to whom she was publicly, as it were, betrothed. Till that hour she had beheld the marquis of Arberry with an equable indifference, neither raising him above nor degrading him below any standard of merit which she had formed to herself among mankind. Now she discovered that in person, in talents, in disposition, in every thing, the marquis of Arberry was in her estimation inferior to Edward Montagu—oh, how inferior! The result of this conclusion, which recurred a hundred times an hour, was a feeling of terror and disgust at the idea of that union, which, till she had seen Edward Montagu, she had contemplated with the tranquil satisfaction resulting from the performance of a duty towards the parents, whom she had ever loved, honoured, and obeyed.

While this transformation in the mind of lady Emily was effecting, the breast of Edward was visited by a change no less power-

ful in its influence upon his peace. He had seen lady Emily, and all the powers and feelings of his mind bowed captive to the force of love.

Every day, every hour he passed in her society served to increase the strength of that passion, in combat with which the proudest efforts of man's boasted reason have so often failed.

He had resided some time with the Roseville family, when one evening in a contemplative mood he sauntered after dark into one of the solitary walks at a distance from the house. The moon arose, and he extended his walk, and indulged his ruminations, until by the silvery light he found himself at the edge of a small lake at one extremity of the Roseville domain.

On the other side of the lake stood a little hut, which was occupied by an old man and woman, who had formerly been servants to lord Roseville, and whose only labour now was to lock and unlock a gate of

the Park, which opened to a carriage road to the next post town.

Edward had that very day walked round this lake, in company with lady Emily ; and they had both chatted with old Hudson and his wife. He never dreamt that it was love which led his feet to revisit this spot ; for to him it seemed altogether chance, that at nine o'clock at night he found himself contemplating the hut, which at noon they had entered together, and that he was now recollecting the sentences and the words which then had fallen from her tongue.

As he stood silently gazing on this object, an incident took place which excited his surprise. At an hour when he imagined old Hudson was at rest, he saw him come forth from his hut, followed by a man muffled up in a great coat ; he saw him unlock the gate ; he saw the stranger depart, the gate again closed, and the old man returning, ere the thought darted across his mind, that the person just vanished was in

size and appearance the resemblance of his supposed father. With the rapidity of thought he was at the cottage, and terrified almost to distraction with his interrogatories the trembling gate-keeper.

"Patience—patience, sir, and I will tell you all," said the old man; "for it is you that are concerned, and I am sure I meant no harm. You must know then, sir, that soon after dark I heard a tapping at our casement, and when I went out, I found a stranger at the door, who asked which was his way into the road;—and then I found he knowed as well as I. At first I did not much like the looks of such a thing; but I soon knew he was no poacher nor thief by his talk, for he spoke quite like a gentleman."

"'Tis he!—'tis he!—Go—go on, my friend," said Edward.

"Nay, sir, for the matter o' that, I ha'n't much more to say; only that he began talking and asking questions so agreeable, all about my lord and lady, and my young lady, and you, and the old duke, and his

son, and such like, that the time passed away main, pleasant over a mug of ale, till at last he axed if I would do him a bit of earvice, which was to deliver a letter to your honour, when you comed next all alone this way of the Park—for he said no one else must know on't. Now I don't like underhand doings—”

“ But, of 'course, good Hudson, you could not refuse to do such a simple thing as that,” interrupted Edward.

“ Why, no—I didn't refuse—because, thinks I, it may be some love business, or that; and there can't be much harm to my lord in a letter: besides, your honour bears such a good name, that I told the old man I would venture upon it. But when we came to the point, he had no letter to deliver; and so, as we had got no such a thing as pen and ink and paper, though I had a bit of wax, he could not write it, you know.”

“ Was ever any thing so unfortunate?” exclaimed Edward. “ But why do I stand

trifling here? I will pursue him, and run all hazards of his displeasure, rather than endure this anxious suspense! Which way did he walk?"

"Lord bless your honour! he did not walk; there was a post-chaise waiting for him at the bottom of the lane."

"And did he leave no message for me?"

"Oh yes, to be sure; and if your honour had not been so terrifyingly flurried, I should have given you the message before. Here it be; he wrote it on a bit of paper out of his pocket-book, with a pencil."

Edward snatched with eagerness a small note, sealed but not directed. His impatience would not brook a moment's delay; he broke the wax, and read these words:

"I go to London; you will of course
" accompany your patron there; and we
" shall meet in that great city when you
" least expect it. It is more than ever pro-
" bable that you are born to prosperity;
" but be prepared to meet adversity. My

“ eye has been constantly upon you ; my
“ heart yearns to embrace you. A few
“ months more will solve all these myste-
“ ries. Do not reject the kindnesses of your
“ patron ; yet do not accept any appoint-
“ ment, nor enter into any engagement that
“ may commit you for the future. Above
“ all, retain that virtuous integrity, and that
“ pure sense of honour, which now adorn
“ you, and without which an imperial dia-
“ dem is a crown of thorns.”

Edward kissed the little billet, and deposited it in his bosom. He rewarded the gate-keeper, and, enjoining him to the strictest silence, departed to indulge in freedom the various emotions which this adventure had created.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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